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THE ATHANASIAN CREED  
VINDICATED





# THE ATHANASIAN CREED VINDICATED

*FROM THE OBJECTIONS OF DEAN STANLEY*

AND

*OTHER MEMBERS OF THE RITUAL COMMISSION*

**With an Appendix**

ON THE PROPOSED REVISION OF THE PRESENT VERSION

BY

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*Si quis credere potest credat, si non, oret ut credat.*—S. Augustine

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## *PREFACE.*

**I**F any demand why I, who have no place or fame as a theologian, have taken part in this controversy—if any apology be required of me beyond the right which every man has of expressing his convictions when the truth is assailed—I must be permitted to say, that I have always found the Athanasian Creed of the utmost importance to myself. I regard the great verities set forth by this Creed as the foundation of all order in earth and heaven—of all order especially in theology. I know of no question affecting our spiritual life and our relations to God, that is not in some way or another connected with it. To me it appears to have summed up clearly yet completely all that the profoundest intellects have laboured to express in every age, of the most mysterious of all doctrines; to have left nothing unsaid that ought to be said upon the Trinity, and to have recalled and repeated all that has been rightly said.

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That the Reformers, anxious to secure the great foundations of the faith, should have retained this Creed in their most popular services and confessions, was significant of their feelings and convictions. They believed that the highest and most spiritual of all truths, as well as the lowest and most practical, were equally the inheritance of all men. In whatever regards the doctrine of the Trinity, the unlearned layman is placed by the Creed on an equal footing with the most accomplished theologian. If it be banished from the Prayer Book, if it be pushed out of sight, where shall men turn for so short, so accurate, so comprehensive an exposition of religious instruction? What book, or what commentary, can they use in the place of the Athanasian Creed? How are they to secure themselves from errors on a subject, where errors are most perilous, and where the most pious and the wisest have been apt to go astray? Merely, then, as a history and summary of all that has been rightly written on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Athanasian Creed is the best of all histories. Merely as preserving for us the Catholic Faith, in the sense in which that faith has been understood and maintained in all ages of the Church

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from the days of Athanasius to the present time, the importance of the Creed is undeniable.

Nor let it be imagined that we can part with the Athanasian Creed, and retain in their comprehensiveness and exactness the truths that are taught by it. With the loss of the Creed the doctrine of the Trinity will vanish ; if it be not already fast disappearing from English theology, at the present day, whether written or oral. Much I hear of the Fatherhood of God, much of the humanity of the Son, much of the beauty and holiness of Christian brotherhood ; but of that which is the foundation of them all—the ground upon which they must all stand—by which alone, excellent as they are, they are true to us, and cease to be notional—the Eternal Trinity, The Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end—scarcely a vestige is found in the thoughts of preachers or their flocks, of writers or their readers.

Yet that Creed sweeps through all Creation—it embraces all that was before Creation—it anticipates all that is to come, not as a divine speculation or prophetic vision, but it ties and connects the eternal and ever blessed Trinity, in their undivided operations with the most commonplace and indifferent

acts and duties of men. Instead of standing aloof from man, too high for the active pursuits and moral obligations of this life, the man himself is taken up into close companionship with these divine mysteries. His is the Father, his the Son, his the Holy Ghost. His is all that God has wrought in the beginning, is working, and shall work hereafter. In him centre all the rays of the Eternal Trinity. In that light he lives and works. And the divine glory and ineffable grandeur of all Creation past, present, and to come are thus associated with the poorest and best efforts of us all.

If then there be any who can realize this faith, let them hold it fast. Let them not be seduced from it by the insinuations of others, however charitable or ingenious they may appear. Do men take their judgment of what is healthy from the sick, or of light from the blind? Let them remember that truth itself, in proportion as it is divine, must appear at first harsh, arbitrary, and exclusive; wounding our corrupt affections; lacerating our sickly and indiscriminating charity. In proportion as it is popular it must become debased. It is only sin and falsehood that sheathe their claws and appear to the inexperienced so sleek, so soft and tolerant. For

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those who have not yet attained to this belief, let them follow the advice of S. Augustine, and pray that they may attain to it, as that which can alone give strength, vitality, and permanence to the truths they are striving to hold.





## *THE ATHANASIAN CREED.*

DEAN STANLEY'S objections to the Athanasian Creed fall under three heads—(1) The darkness and obscurity of its origin; (2) the unsoundness of its statements; and (3) the uncharitableness of its so-called "damnatory clauses." Different as these charges are in themselves, and disproportionate in their importance, it is easy to see that in Dean Stanley's mind they spring from one and the same root. They are partial developments from the same common and barbarous parentage. It is enough for Dean Stanley if he can make it appear that the Athanasian Creed dates no higher than the ninth century;—that is a dark age, dark enough for Dean Stanley's readers. They are prepared to believe that theological thought, as well as theological charity, had by that time disappeared from the world, and been superseded by bigotry and fanaticism. What else could be expected of any Canon of Faith put forth in such disastrous times than that it

should be replete with errors and misstatements. Consequently, the Dean tells us<sup>1</sup> that "a grave question has recently been started by Mr. Ffoulkes, whether, in the absence of any certain indications of an earlier date, it is not of the time of Charlemagne. It is then that we have the first positive proof of its appearance in any manuscript authorities."<sup>2</sup> The Dean is not, however, entirely satisfied with his new guide. He is not prepared to throw off all the evidence for an earlier origin produced by Waterland, and at once to prefer Mr. Ffoulkes' critical scepticism to the careful judgment and undoubted research of Tillemont, Muratori, Montfaucon, or Quesnel. That "the antithetical swing of its sentences" should date its war-stirring numbers from the great Emperor of the West commends itself to Dean Stanley's poetical sympathies; but he is obliged to resign his hypothesis with a sigh, and console himself with the thought that after all the Creed may have started into existence with Clovis and the Visigoths. "If," he says "(according to Waterland's conjecture of the time of its reception), it first started into general acceptance with the triumph of Clovis over the Arian Visigoths"—a conjecture which never entered Water-

<sup>1</sup> Dean Stanley, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> P. 7.

land's head, or any other head than the Dean's—"or, according to another, of Charlemagne over the Byzantine power, it may in this aspect be regarded as the war-song of the orthodox King or Emperor, the hymn of victory over the defeated heretics."<sup>1</sup>

To put this matter in a little clearer light than it now appears in the imaginative haze of Dean Stanley's pamphlet, the reader must be aware that two questions have been started in reference to the history of the Athanasian Creed; the first, in regard to its authorship; and the second, as to the time of its reception in the Church. These are the two questions discussed by Dean Waterland; and he has treated the subject with great learning, care, and research, to which modern criticism has added little or nothing. With regard to its authorship, Waterland is inclined to think, with the most able patristic scholars, that the Creed was composed in the fifth century, but by whom is uncertain. Some, from the days of Bishop Jewel downwards,<sup>2</sup> have attributed it to Vigilius of Thapsus. Muratori assigned it to Venantius Fortunatus, in the sixth

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> It is strange that Bishop Jewel's statement should have been entirely overlooked by Waterland and others. See Jewel's Works, iv. 315.

century. The conjectures of others are recorded by Waterland. Let us hear Dean Stanley :—" Scholars, while unanimous in disavowing its Athanasian authorship, have been engaged in the hitherto fruitless search after its unknown composer. Quesnel conjectured that it was the work of the African Bishop Vigilius, of Thapsus, A.D. 485, *chiefly from the unfortunate reputation which he acquired for passing off his own works under fictitious names.*"<sup>1</sup> The comment is the Dean's, and not Quesnel's. The offence of Vigilius consisted in writing dialogues against Arianism, in which he introduced Athanasius and Arius arguing before a Roman judge in one instance, and Athanasius disputing with a heretic in another. It would be just as reasonable to say that Mr. Savage Landor acquired an "unfortunate reputation" for passing off his own works under fictitious names because he wrote dialogues in the persons of Southey, of the Duke of Wellington, of Porson, and of others. Dean Stanley's sarcasm is the less justifiable, for Vigilius avowed the authorship of these writings, and explained the introduction of these imaginary personages.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> "Plenissime in eis libris quos adversus Sabellium, Photinum et Arrium sub nomine Athanasii tamquam si præsentes cum

The reason for assigning the authorship of the Creed to Vigilius was the prevalence in his writings of certain expressions showing a close similarity to the Latin version of the Creed.<sup>1</sup> But the same argument might be urged in favour of Fulgentius of Ruspæ, and of almost every other African theologian of the fifth and the following century. If Vigilius, or any one of his contemporaries, was the author, how was it that so remarkable a document, and so forcible a denunciation of prevalent errors, did not at once meet with more "general acceptance"? With the single and doubtful testimony brought by Muratori from Fortunatus there is no evidence that the Athanasian Creed was at that time known to the Church.<sup>2</sup>

præsentibus agerent, ubi etiam cognitoris persona videtur inducta, conscripsimus."—Adv. Eutychem v. See Athanasii Opera, ii. 561. Pad. 1777.

<sup>1</sup> I may notice here that of all members of the Latin Church the Africans seem to have studied Athanasius and the question *De Trinitate* with greater interest than any other.

<sup>2</sup> Two references to the Creed, anterior, apparently, to the age of Charlemagne, and unnoticed by Waterland, will be found first in the Pœnitentiale of Archbishop Theodore, published by Petit, from a collection of ancient canons:—"Si quis presbyter, diaconus, vel clericus Symbolum Apostolorum et Fidem S. Athanasii non recensuerit, ab episcopo condemnatur."—i. 102. The other is from the works of S. Leo, published by the Brothers Ballerini, at Venice, in 1757, and also taken from a collection of canons:—"Primum omnium Fidem Catholicam omnes presbyteri et diaconi seu subdiaconi memoriter teneant."—III. 670 and 955.

If the uncertain evidence furnished by the Council of Autun<sup>1</sup> be rejected, we must descend to the eighth or ninth century before we meet with any distinct traces of the existence of the Creed. In the ninth century it had already become so well known, and had grown into such esteem, as to form part of the articles of inquiry at episcopal visitations. Every priest is required to know the Athanasian Creed, and be able to explain it in the vernacular (*verbis communibus*).<sup>2</sup> Such, also, is the injunction of Bishop Hincmar, in his *Capitula* issued to his diocese A.D. 852.<sup>3</sup> In this century it begins to be quoted for the first time for dogmatic purposes; by Hincmar himself, in his work, *De Unâ*, &c., against Gottschalk (ii. 499); by Agobardus against Felix; and by others.

These considerations induced Mr. Ffoulkes and others to believe, according to Dean Stanley, that the Athanasian Creed was of no higher antiquity

<sup>1</sup> Held in 663 or 666. Waterland, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Regino, p. 25. Under the head, *Quid sit a presbytero requirendum?* Lips. 1840.

<sup>3</sup> Waterland quotes an order from Bishop Hatto (A.D. 806), ordering all priests to learn the Faith of Athanasius by heart (*Fides S. Athanasii a sacerdotibus discetur*), and recite it at prime. P. 37. See also a similar order by Anscharius to his monks (*ib.* 39), and others.

than "the time of Charlemagne"—a hypothesis which seems to me to be involved in greater difficulties than any other. Could such a Confession of Faith, involving the highest points of Christian doctrine, have emanated from an ignorant or barbarous ecclesiastic? Could anyone not thoroughly acquainted with the controversies in which the Church had been engaged from the Nicene Council to the age of Charlemagne have stated the questions in dispute with so much precision, or defined the faith held by the orthodox in all ages with so much accuracy? The Athanasian Creed is a clear and masterly summary of all that has been written on the doctrine of the Trinity, not by crude and shallow thinkers, but by the subtlest intellects of the Greek and the Latin Churches. Every expression in it contains a history in itself; and in every statement is gathered up a volume of controversy that no untutored mind could master or comprehend, much less at a period when books were almost unattainable. There is no epoch in the middle ages, the records of which are more minute, or the writers of which are better known to us, than those of Charlemagne. Is the least notice or the slightest hint to be found in any of them that the Athanasian Creed was found or composed in



their own age? If it had sprung into being at so late a date, could the fact have been unknown to the Emperor's friend and contemporary Alcuin? Could it have escaped the penetrating eye of Hincmar? Would Alcuin, Hincmar, and Agobardus, all of whom were contemporary with Charlemagne, to say nothing of others mentioned by Waterland,<sup>1</sup> have unanimously fallen into the mistake of attributing to Athanasius a composition invented by one of their own contemporaries? Or, supposing even that they had imagined that it was a recovery of some lost production of the great Greek Father, would they have failed to congratulate themselves and their age on so important a discovery? On the contrary, all these writers speak of the Creed as if it were perfectly well known in their own days; and they recommend it as a Confession of Faith with which the Church was thoroughly familiar.<sup>2</sup>

But if it was the invention of some "unknown Frenchman or Spaniard," what purpose was to be served by palming it on the world under the name of

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 35, 41.

<sup>2</sup> "Beatus igitur Athanasius, &c., in expositione Catholica Fidei, quam ipse egregius doctor conscripsit, et quam Universalis confitetur Ecclesia."—Alcuin, *De Process. S.S.*, sec. ix., p. 750. See also *De Fide Trinit.* i. 1.

S. Athanasius? The Dean will tell us that "by the magic of his name this Confession of unknown origin and ambiguous character found its way into the Western Church."<sup>1</sup> But Dean Stanley is confounding his notions of Athanasius with the notions of the eighth and ninth centuries. To those who have not examined the subject, it will appear surprising how little the voice of the great Greek Father was heard in the West, how rarely any direct reference was made to his writings by Western Churchmen from the days of S. Augustine to the tenth century. Even among the Greeks the fame of Athanasius was eclipsed by S. Cyril and the two Gregories; and though Hincmar appeals to Athanasius, such appeals are rare and exceptional. In the writings of his contemporary Scotus Erigena, who was well acquainted with the Greek Fathers, quotations from S. Basil, the two Gregories, from Maximus, and even from Origen, are frequent, but not a word is given from Athanasius. Scotus explicitly affirms that, next to the Apostles, there was no expositor of Holy Scripture of greater authority among the Greeks than Gregory the Theologian, and none more famous among the Latins than

<sup>1</sup> P. 3.

S. Augustine.<sup>1</sup> If, then, it had been desirable to usher into the world a spurious production under a noble name, any one of these Greek Fathers would have answered the purpose better in the Western Church than the name of Athanasius.

But, after all, this historical disquisition of the Dean's on the literary history of the Creed is only a kind of *velitatio*—a sort of careless and graceful rattling of the keys with which a consummate musician displays the agility of his hands and the diamond ring on his finger before he throws up his head and settles seriously to work. And, like a first-rate performer, who is sure of the applause of a willing audience, the Dean rapidly passes from the external history of the Creed to examine “its internal characteristics.”<sup>2</sup> The Dean regards it as “a triumphant pæan,” as a theological war-song, as a “hymn of victory over the defeated heretics.” He evidently imagines that the Creed was “in general acceptance” among the subjects of Charlemagne, and stood in the place of the “Marseillaise,”

<sup>1</sup> “Scientes præter Sanctos Apostolos nullum apud Græcos fuisse in expositionibus divinæ Scripturæ majoris auctoritatis Gregorio Theologo, nullum apud Romanos Aurelio Augustino.” P. 193, ed. Oxon. 1681.

<sup>2</sup> P. 7.

or of those less respectable refrains with which the North American combatants cheered themselves in their efforts against the South. I should have been glad to believe with the Dean that the soldiers of Clovis or Charlemagne, or that any other soldier went into battle with such a war-song on his lips. Could anything be more mighty, or more ennobling in the mouth of a soldier, than those simple words, "He that hath done good shall go into life everlasting, and he that hath done evil into everlasting fire;" even though he should have no higher conception of this and other clauses of the Creed than that doing good and keeping the Catholic Faith meant, as in Corporal Trim's commentary, allowing three-halfpence a day out of his pay to his father and mother in their old age, and presenting his fire-lock at the enemy? But, unfortunately for this hypothesis, there is no reason for supposing that the soldiers or subjects in general, either of Clovis or of Charlemagne, had ever heard of the Athanasian Creed, or were able to repeat a single clause of it. The Creed was enjoined upon the priesthood only and the monks in their cloisters: the laity then, and long after, were exclusively instructed in the Apostles' Creed and the Ten Commandments. "The

poetic fire in its vitals"<sup>1</sup> was confined to the higher order of the clergy; and how soon it was introduced into the services of the Church has not been determined. The earliest notice of it is given by Martene,<sup>2</sup> who tells us that about the ninth and tenth centuries it began to form part of the devotions at prime in various monastic houses.

But the Dean has a more serious objection to urge than its martial spirit, or "the antithetical swing" of its sentences.<sup>3</sup> He asserts that the Creed is "full of errors;"<sup>4</sup> it is "inaccurate even to heresy;"<sup>5</sup> "little better than Socinianism disguised."<sup>6</sup> If these charges be true, what must we think of Dean Stanley himself and the Ritual Commission? If those Commissioners believed, as Dean Stanley professes to believe, that the Athanasian Creed is chargeable with such fatal errors, every one of them, I must think, was guilty of a flagrant dereliction of his duty in not boldly protesting against the further retention of the Creed under any form, or any pretext whatever. Condescension to the wishes of others, modifying the language of the Creed, appending an explanatory rubric, was weak-

<sup>1</sup> P. 11.<sup>2</sup> De Ritibus, iii. 19.<sup>3</sup> P. 12.<sup>4</sup> P. 13.<sup>5</sup> P. 37.<sup>6</sup> P. 45.

ness wholly unjustifiable. Either, then, these Commissioners, specially summoned for their ability by the fiat of the Sovereign, were unable to detect the errors and the heresy in the Creed Dean Stanley professes to detect, or they did not believe the Creed was heretical.

As Dean Stanley's book will be in the hands of all those who take an interest in this subject, I may be excused from literally repeating here what he has said on the two cardinal words of the Creed, *substance* and *person*. It will be enough if I state, as clearly, but as summarily as is consistent with justice, his somewhat confused and tangled argument<sup>1</sup>—tangled at best, and confused, as it seems to me. Dean Stanley thinks that "it is in the highest degree improbable that the uneducated—it is in a high degree improbable that even many educated persons—should grasp the metaphysical idea, either of the Latin *substantia*, or of the still more remote Greek *usia*."<sup>2</sup> Undoubtedly it is; but what theologian requires us to fathom the metaphysical depths of one or the other? The Athanasian Creed makes no such unreasonable demand on its own behalf, whatever Dean Stanley may make for it.

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 14-26.

<sup>2</sup> P. 16.

Is it so difficult to comprehend the assertion that Christ was "Man, of the substance of His mother, born in the world"? Does the Dean mean to tell us that before we can assent to this simple proposition we must have sounded all the metaphysical depths of *substantia* and *usia*? Is it so profound and perplexing a proposition that it cannot be brought within the reach of vulgar capacities? Had the Psalmist in his eye the metaphysical analysis, before he ventured to write the verse, "Thine eyes did see my *substance*, yet being imperfect;" or must we do the same before we can repeat it after him? Further, if the Dean proposes to reject the Athanasian Creed, for using the word substance, what will he do with the Nicene Creed: "Begotten, not made, being *of one substance* with the Father"? Is this also heretical? Suppose, then, I change the expression, and substitute its equivalent, that "Christ took our human *nature* upon Him, and was born of a pure Virgin." Is that an intelligible proposition? Can it not be made clear to a child, if necessary? "Oh, no," says the Dean, "it is in the highest degree improbable that the uneducated—it is in a high degree improbable that even many educated persons, should grasp the

metaphysical idea of *nature*." If, then, nothing is to be taught in the Church of which we have not grasped "the metaphysical idea," not only the Dean's, but every man's theology, and every man's devotions, must be reduced to the smallest possible minimum. I mean not to speak offensively, for I entertain for Dean Stanley the highest respect, even when he speaks without due consideration, as on the present occasion.

But, says the Dean, the expression is anathematized by the Nicene Council, and is directly at variance with the teaching of Athanasius.<sup>1</sup> "At the Council of Alexandria," he informs us, "A.D. 362, there was an attempt made to introduce another definition of *hypostasis*. But Athanasius resisted the attempt, and insisted on leaving the matter in its original vagueness;" and he adds that, "whereas, in the early days of Athanasius, it would have been heresy to divide the *hypostasis* in the Athanasian Creed [now] it is heresy not to divide it. Whereas, in the time of Athanasius, it was heresy to say that person (*hypostasis*) and substance (*usia*) were different, in the Athanasian Creed it is heresy to say they are the same."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 18, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Here the Dean subjoins a note, for which he alleges the



Special pleading like this, however ingenious, is easily turned upon its author. It was not heresy in the opinion of Athanasius, but the very reverse, if we are to believe his own words, to divide the *hypostasis*, as the Athanasian Creed divides it; neither is it now. It *was* heresy to confuse the *hypostasis*, as implying *person*, with *usia*, as implying sub-

authority of Bishop Kaye, "that Athanasius, in his own writings, avoided even his own phrase *homoïsis*," p. 18. I recommend to the Dean's notice the following passages. About the year A.D. 362, and fifteen years after the Council held at Sardica, during which the Arians had been generally condemned, Athanasius, in his desire to make peace, wrote a letter (*tomus*) to the clergy at Antioch, desiring them to admit to their communion all those who, though holding language about the *hypostasis* at variance with the Council of Nice, agreed with it in its meaning. He found two bodies, one using *hypostasis*, as equivalent to *person*—*τρεῖς λέγοντας ὑποστάσεις*,—and another as equivalent to *substance*, or *usia*. On questioning the former whether they agreed with the Arians, and finding that they admitted one Godhead (*μὴν θεότητα, καὶ μὴν ἀρχὴν, καὶ υἱὸν μὲν ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ*), as the Fathers asserted, he approved of their explanation. Similarly, upon examination, he approved of the others who substantially agreed in the same doctrine, though using the word *hypostasis* in another sense.—*Ath. Opera*, I. 617, ed. 1777. Again, in *De Synodis*, he repeatedly justifies the use of it. *Ib.* p. 611; and he approves of the Nicene Council for adopting it—*γεννητὸν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς τὸν υἱὸν ὁμοούσιον*, p. 612. Similarly *Ad. Apos.* p. 714. And again: "Who of the faithful will refuse to confess that God the Word, born man of the Virgin Mary, *ὁμοούσιος ἄν' τοῦ πατρὸς*"—and repeatedly for almost every successive sentence, a dozen times at the least. *Contra Apollin.* p. 741. What can the Dean mean?

stance, in the time of S. Athanasius, and so it is now.

But I would fain know what is the purpose of the Dean's argument? What have we to do at present with these disputes of Athanasius and his Arian opponents? Admit that these words were as obscure as Dean Stanley wishes to make them. Admit that the Greek word *hypostasis* has changed its meaning during the discussion, what then? Is that any reason for rejecting the Athanasian Creed, or the word *substance*, as used in it? If so, we must reject any term directly it becomes more accurately defined, and is taken out of vague and vulgar into stricter use. Is the Dean's quarrel with the words *person* and *substance*, or with their meaning? If with the words, does he think it will contribute to a clearer understanding of the Creed if we adopt the earlier terms, and word the passage thus:—"Neither confounding the *hypostasis* nor dividing the *usia*"? Does he think such a rendering would contribute to edification? Or does he object to the doctrine, and contend that our Lord Jesus Christ is not "God, of the substance of the Father, and Man, of the substance of His Mother"? I will not say, let him take whatever alternative he pleases,

for I would rather he should talk nonsense than talk heresy.

But to set a plain tale before plain readers. The Council at Nice had thought it sufficient, after declaring the Son to be of the same essence or nature (*consubstantialis*) with the Father, to pronounce anathema against all those who should venture to assert that the Son was "of a different *hypostasis*,<sup>1</sup> or essence," from the Father, using the two words as exactly equivalent, or rather determining by the latter the sense in which it employed the former. The necessity for such a caution affords a presumption (even if other evidence were wanting) that the term *hypostasis*, already before the date of the Council, had been used indiscriminately for *person* and for *essence*. The Council did not declare under "an anathema, that person and substance, *hypostasis* and *usia*, are the same," as Dean Stanley says (p. 18),<sup>2</sup> whether he means by that, as his words

<sup>1</sup> Ἐξ ἐτέρας ὑποστάσεων ἢ οὐσίας.

<sup>2</sup> Dean Stanley says it is used in the New Testament "as equivalent to *usia* and *essence*." It is never so used, except we are to insist that in Heb. i. 3, where it is correctly translated *person* in our version, it must mean *essence*. The original signification of the word is *basis*, or *foundation*, or *support*. Faith (Heb. xi. 1) is the substance, or firm foundation of our hopes. And the passage quoted by Dr. Burton from Artemidorus, where

imply, that there was no distinction between person and essence, or whether he means that they declared the words to be synonymous. They wished to guard themselves against the supposition of using *hypostasis* in a different sense from nature, or essence. If they had done as the Dean affirms, how could Athanasius have defended them? How could he have repeatedly insisted on the distinction? Thus, in his encyclical on S. Matt. xi. 22, written about A.D. 343, he says, "the true explanation of the word *holy* denotes the three *hypostases* (τὰς τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις)." Again, in the same, "He blasphemes against one or other of the *hypostases* (ὁποτέραν τῶν ὑποστάσεων)." Again, also, De Fide (p. 80), "When we acknowledge three *hypostases* it is not as if they were corporeally divided (σωματοφύως)."

It might have been thought that the Council had taken sufficient precaution for guarding its Confession from ambiguity by thus coupling the word *hypostasis* with *usia*. But the Oriental Church, φαντασία and ὑπόστασις are opposed, shows this: "Imaginary riches that are without any firm or real foundation" (*hypostasis*).—*Comp. Arist. De Mundo*, cap. IV. The entire context in Heb. i. 3, justifies the English version of *person*. Christ is the image of the invisible God:—*χαρακτήρ τοῦ προσώπου* (*Diod. Sic.* i. p. 58), equivalent to *hypostasis*. This is urged again and again by S. Basil.

accustomed to hear the former word used in the two different senses of person and essence (*id quod proprium*, and *id quod commune*<sup>1</sup>), and more than usually sensitive to the least departure from the orthodox faith, insisted that the term *hypostasis* should be confined to *person*, and that *usia* should be left to indicate nature, or *substance*. In this resolution S. Basil, the leader of the movement, was supported by the two Gregories, and by the most eminent Fathers of the Eastern Church. By their efforts the word *hypostasis* became restricted to the definite meaning of *person*, to which it has since been confined, not as Dean Stanley urges, varying with every age (p. 18).<sup>2</sup>

But the Western Church, or at least its greatest ornament, S. Jerome, was not willing to accept at once this stricter terminology, not because, as the Dean would make it appear, S. Jerome objected to this preciser meaning, but because he was not yet convinced that such was the legitimate signification of *hypostasis*. Being then in Syria, little acquainted

<sup>1</sup> Of this there is no doubt. See the authorities quoted from Origen and others by the Benedictine editors of S. Basil, in their preface to volume iii.

<sup>2</sup> See the letters of S. Basil; Ep. xxxviii., addressed to his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and to Terentius, ccxiv.

with the bearings of the discussion, he wrote to Pope Damasus : " I am asked whether I acknowledge the three *hypostases* ? I ask what those words mean ? They tell me they signify ' three subsisting persons.' I reply, that is my belief. They urge that this is not sufficient, and they wish me to use the word *hypostasis*. I'm afraid that by *hypostasis* is meant *substantia* or *essence*, because in the secular schools *hypostasis* means nothing more than *usia*.<sup>1</sup> I fear lest by affirming three *hypostases* I should acknowledge three natures, and the more they press me to use the word the more my suspicions are increased. Pray write to me and let me know whether I am to receive or reject the words." Can anything be more clear than this ? Had S. Jerome any perplexity in admitting the three persons in one God ? Was not his difficulty lest he should be thought by any incautious expression to deny them ?<sup>2</sup>

I shall not attempt to follow the Dean in his discussion upon the origin and use of the word *Person*, because I do not understand that he means to tax the term with being heretical, but only obscure.

<sup>1</sup> A mistake of S. Jerome's, unless we are to understand by the word the secular schools of his own age.

<sup>2</sup> See Fleury, xvii., sec. 29, for this and the passage from S. Basil, quoted by Dean Stanley.

Obscurity is relative, and the Dean has certainly done his best to perplex and confuse himself and his readers by his remarks. "*Persona*," he observes, "is a mask—a character" (as early as the days of Tertullian at least it was used to signify a *person* or *actor*, like the Dean's own word *character*); "just as the Greek word which most nearly corresponds to it (*πρόσωπον*) is a face. As applied, therefore, to the Deity, it meant the outward manifestation, as distinct from the inward essence of the Supreme Being. By slow degrees the word was transformed into its modern but now almost universal meaning of a separate individual" (p. 21).

I do not admire the Dean's metaphysics, neither do I profess to understand what he means by "separate individual," nor whether he thinks there are certain individuals which are not separate; but I must admire his inconsistency; for after he had just shown himself bitterly opposed to the use of metaphysical terms in theology, no sooner does he undertake to explain a word than he falls unconsciously into the very practice he condemns. Not that he is quite so masterly or so accurate as the barbarian author—Frank or Spaniard—to whom he ascribes the Creed. But I ask, what does he mean

by "slow degrees"? The word *πρόσωπον*, like its cognate *persona*, meant, as early as the time of the New Testament, what we mean by *person*. "Thou regardest not the *person* of men," *πρόσωπον ἀνθρώπων*, Mark xii. 14, Luke xx. 21; "by means of many persons," ἐκ πολλῶν προσώπων, 2 Cor. i. 11. "Having men's persons in admiration" (θαυμάζοντες πρόσωπα), Jude 16, and so of many others. This usage was even much older, as in Polybius, ἐξήτουν ἡγεμόνα καὶ πρόσωπον. Now if Dean Stanley thinks that because *persona* and *πρόσωπον* at one time meant a mask, they were not correctly used in the Creed to signify *person*, I am afraid his censure will reach higher than the author of the Creed, and he must include within his condemnation S. Paul and the rest of the Apostles. If that is not his meaning, I fail to perceive what this parade of etymology aims at.

But, says Dean Stanley, people's notions about *person* are so erroneous and confused that it is misunderstood by hundreds.<sup>1</sup> Does he think that their ideas will become clearer if we banish it from theology and consign the Athanasian Creed to oblivion? People's notions about many things are very obscure—notably so of their duties both to God



and man. Shall we then get rid of the Ten Commandments? Shall we for the same reason proscribe the Bible? Rather, this is one of the strongest reasons for retaining Bible, Creeds, and Commandments.

But he has another class of objections, not so much to the Latin text of the Athanasian Creed as to our English version. "It has," he says, "been presented to the English public in language which is sometimes *inaccurate even to heresy*. Some of these errors result from the compilers of our Liturgy having been deceived into acceptance of a Greek version of the Creed, as the original; such, for example, as the substitution already noticed of '*incomprehensible*' for '*infinite*,' the substitution of '*believe rightly*' for '*believe faithfully*;' the insertion of the heretical words, '*every Person by Himself* to be God and Lord;' the use of the word '*dividing*' for '*separating*' the substance. Some have crept in from the preponderating influence of Luther; such as the word '*must thus think*,' for '*let him think*;' and '*none is greater or less*' for '*nothing greater or less*,' an expression which, if less intelligible, is more Biblical." These expressions, the Dean thinks, are inaccurate even to heresy. "To these," he continues, "must be added the grossest

of all; the use (as we have seen) of the modern word 'person,'<sup>1</sup> as the equivalent of a phrase of essentially different meaning. Whatever may be the use of the Creed in the future of the English Church, it seems difficult to defend in the past the public recital of a document confessedly calculated, *by these numerous errors, to mislead in almost every verse on subjects* which are pronounced in the Creed itself to be of the most tremendous significance."<sup>2</sup>

The "libel," to use an old word, is a strong one. But it is not half strong enough if the statements of the Creed be as heretical and as erroneous as Dean Stanley asserts. If he believes his own accusations, the mildness of his condemnation is unintelligible. "Difficult to defend," indeed! Why no language would be strong enough to mark the iniquity of such conduct. The ungodly artifices of Tetzels making a gross traffic of indulgences for sin would be as nothing compared with the iniquity of a Church that wilfully ventured to dictate error and heresy upon the most cardinal points of the Christian Faith, and fulminated anathemas against those who refused to obey it. No censure could adequately reach a crime so diabolical. What must the reader

<sup>1</sup> P. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 37, 38.

think? How can he acquit the Dean? Either he has put forth a grave accusation against the Athanasian Creed—the gravest that could enter the imagination of man—the most pernicious, if true, in its consequences,—which he does not really believe, or if he believes it, he is content to express his abhorrence in the mildest possible form, amounting almost to indifference. Is this the feeling with which the Dean regards heretical and erroneous teaching? He cannot surely be serious. He cannot weigh the force of his own words. He is a dialectician, amusing himself and his hearers with a shadow fight—*de lana caprina*. He cannot feel, he cannot appreciate the tremendous consequences attached to his own reasoning; whether he justly convicts the Athanasian Creed of propagating error and heresy; or whether that accusation be false, unfounded, and unjust.

In this long bead-roll of inaccuracies “even to heresy,” I would gladly know whether all the instances referred to by Dean Stanley fall under the description. Take the first, *incomprehensible*. If the use of this word be heretical, then every Father of the Church was a heretic from the days of S. Athanasius to those of Scotus Erigena. For there

is no word more frequently applied to the Trinity than this: *ἕνα ἀπαθῆ καὶ ἀκατάληπτον* (Athanas. i. 286), *ἀκατάληπτός ἐστιν ἡ ὑπόστασις ἡ θειά* (Cyril, Hier. lib. vi. § 5), *τὸ ἀκατάληπτον . . . ἴσον ἐστὶν ἐφ' ἐκάστω τῶν ἐν τῇ Τριάδι πεπιστευμένων προσώπων* (Greg. Nyss. Ep. p. 45, ed. Carrac.), *οὐ γὰρ το μὲν μᾶλλον ἀκατάληπτόν τε καὶ ἄκτιστον τὸ δὲ ἦπτον* (Basil, Ep. 38). Then S. Chrysostom's treatise, *De Deo Incomprehensibili*, was worse than waste of time. It was heretical throughout. Again I refer to such passages as, "Considera incomprehensibilem esse unitæ Divinitatis virtutem" (Vigil. Tap. p. 786, B. M. P.), "Incomprehensibilis et immortalis" (Fulgent. De Fide, ib. ix. 168), and a score of others familiar to the least experienced reader of the Fathers. If this be heretical, Dean Stanley is alone in his orthodoxy.

2. His next charge is the expression, "believe rightly." I refer him to the following: *ὁ νοῦς σαρκὶ συνδεθείς . . . πίστεως δεῖται καὶ πολιτείας ὀρθῆς* (Basil, Ep. viii. § 12), *οὐ γὰρ ἡ λέξις ἀλλ' ἡ διάνοια καὶ ἡ μετ' εὐσεβείας ἀγωγή συνίστησι τὸν πιστὸν* (Athanas. i. 220, Epist. ad Episcopos, &c.). "Cum transierit hoc sæculum quid tibi dicetur? Quia recte credidisti in carnem Christi, modo fruiere maiestate et divini-

tate Christi" (August. Serm. 246, § 5). "Quisquis a vera fide deviaverit veræ salutis gratiam non habebit" (Fulgentius Rusp. xxvii. 352, B. M. P.). But if Dean Stanley thinks the expression to "believe rightly" instead of believing "faithfully" is erroneous and heretical, how comes he to have passed by as innocuous the words immediately succeeding, of which "believe rightly" is only another form? "It is necessary to everlasting salvation, that he also believe *rightly* the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the *right* faith is, that we believe," &c. Evidently "believing rightly" and "right faith" are synonymous. It is necessary for everlasting salvation that the Christian should hold the right and not an erroneous faith respecting the Incarnation, and to do this he must believe, &c. This is a statement every one must admit, whether he accept the Athanasian Creed or not. He may deny the correctness of that faith as described in the Creed, but he would be wanting in common sense to say, that the general proposition of the necessity of a right faith is erroneous. For if a right faith is not necessary, will the Dean assert that a wrong faith is necessary? If a right faith, as he says, is heretical, a wrong faith must be orthodox; in other words, wrong must be

right ; a contradiction I must leave to the Dean's logic to reconcile.

3. But I pass on to his third objection ; and that is, to use his own phraseology, " the insertion of the heretical words, '*Every Person by Himself* to be God and Lord.' "

Now would any one believe that a dignitary of the Church of England, a scholar of no mean repute, and a former Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Oxford, could consign to paper, and record to everlasting generations, how little he knew of the very elements of that theology which it is his profession to teach ? Shades of Bull, of Pearson, and of Waterland ! A Dean of Westminster, an eminent advocate of theological reforms, a member of the Ritual Commission, charges the Athanasian Creed with heresy for stating that " each person in the Trinity is by Himself both God and Lord " ! And this, be it observed, in the teeth of that other verse which he allows to pass unchallenged : " Such as the Father is (*Qualis est Pater*), such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost." If then the Father is by and of Himself, without derivation or aid from any other, both God and Lord (*Dominus*), whose power, glory, and dominion,

of Himself and by Himself, extend throughout all ages, then must the Son and the Holy Ghost be equally and of themselves God and Lord, or all the three Persons in the Trinity are not co-eternal together and co-equal. If they are not, then Athanasius, Basil, Ambrose, Augustine, Fathers, Councils, Latin, English, French theologians, are all in the wrong, and they must re-learn their lesson from Arius and the Dean of Westminster. Why, that which the Dean denies is precisely what all the great Fathers of the Greek, Latin, and English Churches have been striving for centuries to establish. It is scarcely possible to read even half a dozen pages of their works without becoming sensible of this. Thus S. Ambrose: "Sicut Pater dicitur solus Deus verus, cui nihil sit commune cum cæteris (the Athanasian, *by Himself*), ita etiam solus est Filius, imago Veri Dei.<sup>1</sup> Solus ergo Filius facit sicut et Pater; quia scriptum est: *Quæcumque facio ipse facit*" (De Fide, v. 2). And again: "Si nuncupativum Deum non audent dicere, restat ut Deus verus sit, veri Patris non dissimilis sed æqualis, qui cum

<sup>1</sup> Compare S. August. c. Maxim., "ab eo quod Pater et Christus dictus est Solus verus Deus non excluditur Spiritus Sanctus" ii. 15, § 4.

et justificet et sanctificet quod velit, *non foris adsumens* sed in se habens sanctificandi potestatem, quomodo non est verus Deus ?" (Ibid. v. 1.) So in Augustine : "Hæc Trinitas unius est ejusdemque naturæ atque substantiæ, non minor in singulis (*i.e.* in 'every Person by Himself'), quam in omnibus, nec major in omnibus quam in singulis" (Epist. vol. ii. 911); *i.e.* "In this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another." Once more : "Ut ipse (Victricius),<sup>1</sup> a Deo doctus es, doces, unitatem Trinitatis sine confusione jungens, et Trinitatem ipsius unitatis sine separatione distinguens, ita ut nulla alteri persona conveniat, et in omni persona Trium Deus unus eluceat; et tantus quidem Filius, quantus et Pater, quantus et Spiritus Sanctus; sed semper quisque sui nominis proprietate distinctus individuum retinet in virtutis et gloriæ æqualitate concordiam" (Paulinus ad. Vict. Ep. xxvii.). ὁ θεὸς Λόγος ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἔχων τὴν πᾶσαν τελειότητα, αὐτοτέλειος ὢν, αὐτόθεος ὢν. Epiph. Hær. lxxvii.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is that Victricius of whom Paulinus speaks so highly, and Dean Stanley consigns to infamy by a hasty flirt of his pen. See p. 29. For what reason? Will he tell us to what works of Victricius he refers?

<sup>2</sup> It would be easy to multiply authorities of this kind. Thus in the passage referred to by Bishop Bull (in Athanas.



The Dean, I admit, is not exclusively accountable for this nonsense. Grossly heretical as it is, he is as incapable of consciously talking heresy as M. Jourdain was of talking prose. He derived these and other notions from Dr. Swainson. In criticising our authorized version of the Creed, Dr. Swainson affirms that it "savours of heresy to confess every Person by Himself;" and he adds:—"We may speak

Orat. c. Gent., p. 37), ἀληθινὸς υἱὸς ὑπάρχων, δύναμις ἐστὶ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ σοφία, καὶ λόγος, οὐ κατὰ μετοχὴν τὰῦτα ὄν, οὐδὲ ἔξωθεν ἐπιγινωσκόμενον τούτων αὐτῶ . . ἀλλ' αὐτοσοφία, αὐτολόγος, αὐτοδύναμις ἰδίᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐστὶ. It has sometimes been thought as if Bishop Bull in his remarks, *De Subordinatione Filii*, was opposed to the statement of the Athanasian Creed. But the mistake arises from confounding the two expressions *a se Deus* and *per se Deus*, the one referring to the origin, the other to the substance of the Second Person in the Trinity. Thus he says (p. 256), αὐτό signifies *ipsissimam rei veritatem, non causam aut originem*; and he approves of Valesius for justifying the orthodoxy of Eusebius, because the latter had styled our Lord "αὐτόθεον, id est *per se ac vere Deum*," Ibid. He also refers with approbation to S. Hilary, stating of the Son; "qui solus et natura sua Deus verus est" (p. 276), and to Tertullian: "Deus ac Dominus est Filius æque ac Pater;" and again, Adv. Prax., "Non quasi non et Pater Deus, et Filius Deus, et Spiritus Sanctus Deus, et Deus unusquisque." The truth is that Bishop Bull's strict and technical use of the word *Subordinatio*, which refers exclusively to the order of the Three Persons, and is intended to mark the Filial relationship, and not the inferiority, of the Son to the Father, has been by his modern critics confounded with the English word *Subordination*, in the sense of inferiority. Against this notion no one would have protested more strongly than Bishop Bull himself. At the same time I think his word was unhappily chosen.

of 'a separate confession' in regard to One or Other; but it is wrong to speak of One or Other as being 'by Himself.'"<sup>1</sup> By which, I suppose, he means to say—for he speaks so very gingerly that I am not sure whether I grasp his meaning, or whether there is any meaning to grasp—that to "divide the substance," by speaking of any one Person of the Trinity as existing apart or by Himself, has a savour of heresy. Of course it has, and something more than savour, for it is heresy itself. But the Creed does not speak of any one Person of the Trinity being "by Himself," but, as Dean Stanley honestly enough quotes the clause, "being by Himself both God and Lord" (*αὐτόθεος, αὐτοδύναμις*). If Dr. Swainson denies this, if he thinks this "savours of heresy," he must have a superlatively delicate appreciation of error and heresy, and the most orthodox divinity would fail to satisfy his theological palate. I will not contest the point with him whether it be right, as he says it is, to speak of a separate confession "in regard to One or Other," and "wrong to speak of One or Other as being by Himself;" for with that I am not concerned. I shall only protest against his reproduction of

<sup>1</sup> The Athanasian Creed, p. 29.

that old logical fallacy, *a bene compositis ad male divisa*.<sup>1</sup>

From the same mint Dean Stanley derived his other imputations against the Creed—viz., “the use of the word ‘*dividing*’ for ‘*separating*’ the substance;” the phrase, “must thus think,” for “let him think;” and “none is greater or less.” Not, indeed, to do Dr. Swainson justice, that he gravely charges these expressions to the score of heresy, as Dean Stanley does, or that he thinks they are errors in themselves; but he considers them as an unwarrantable intrusion into the English from the Greek and Lutheran text. I shall have to consider this subject hereafter. I will, therefore, confine myself, for the present, to Dean Stanley’s objections, which rest upon a different basis.

In the first place, I am utterly at a loss to understand, if “separating the substance” be orthodox,

<sup>1</sup> In the Latin:—“Quia sicut singulatim unamquamque Personam Deum et Dominum confiteri Christiana veritate compellimur.” This Dr. Swainson translates “make a separate confession.” But, by all just rules of construction, *singulatim* is to be taken with *unamquamque*, and then the meaning will be as in our English version, “Every Person by Himself,” or “each Person singly.” “Singulatim compellimur,” “we are individually compelled,” is absurd in fact and in grammar. Our English rendering is confirmed by the Greek and the German, and is strictly in conformity with the authority of the Fathers.

as the Dean and the Doctor appear to allow, why "dividing the substance" should be heterodox. I cannot fathom the distinction. Perhaps it is for lack of that delicate appreciation of the flavour of differences possessed by Dr. Swainson. Some good Christian help me! What is the difference between "dividing" and "separating"? If I turn to Johnson—justly a great authority in these matters with Dean Stanley<sup>1</sup>—I find the word "separate" explained by the word "divide;" and when I turn to "divide," I find it explained by "separate." Yet Dean Stanley and Professor Swainson, with all the gravity of Sancho Panza's physician in the Island of Barataria, assure me that whilst the word "*separate*" "strengthens the stomach, and is healthy of digestion," the word "*divide*" "savours of heretical pravity, and is naught." What is worse, it must now go forth to the world, upon the authority of two eminent theologians, that we must no longer say "the Holy and Undivided," but "the Holy and Unseparated Trinity." This is a novel and startling doctrine, not only for the readers of the Fathers, but even of English theology, if any such remain. For nothing is more certain than that, whatever

<sup>1</sup> See p. 21.

deleterious influence may appear in the word *divide* to Dr. Swainson, the older theologians used it with entire unconsciousness of any such peril. Thus, Bishop Bull, quoting from Dionysius:—"Non igitur *dividenda* est in tres Deitates admirabilis et divina Unitas." (P. 142.) And, again:—"Singula illa nomina de quibus locutus sum inseparabilia a se invicem sunt, nec dividi queunt." (*Ib.* Compare Grabe's note, p. 150.) And, again, St. Hilary:—"Non ergo videri potest *divisio* substantiarum, quæ nihil aliud studuit, quam ut per trium subsistentium nomen triplicis vocabuli excluderet unionem, ad *separationem* diversæ in Filio et in Patre substantiæ introducta." (Bull, 163.) "Individuum et inseparatum Filium a Patre." (Tertullian adv. Praxeam, c. 19.) "Ostendens nihil divisionis esse inter Patrem et Filium." (Gaudentius, p. 142, ed. 1757.) "Divisionem non capit unitas Deitatis." (*Ib.*, 147.) "Unitam Substantiam in tribus partibus dividens." (Vigil. Taps. 776, B. M. P.) "Nihil ibi possit separari vel dividi." (Fulgent. De Fide, *ib.*, ix. 68.) And so of a hundred other places.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "I think," says Dr. Swainson (p. 29), "that 'dividing the substance,' in lieu of 'separating,' may be traced to τὴν οὐσίαν διαχωρίζοντες." But if he will turn to his own supposed copy of the Greek, by which he imagines the Reformers were misled, he

But if Dr. Swainson's appreciation of orthodoxy is greatly shocked by the instances quoted above, he is more discontented still by "the offensive" translation, "*must thus think of the Trinity*" (*ita de Trinitate sentiat*: οὕτω περὶ τριάδος φρονεῖτω), which, at all events, has not been intruded from the Greek. No doubt "*ita sentiat*," taken without any reference to the general import and purpose of the Creed, may be translated, as Dr. Swainson contends, "Let him thus think of the Trinity;" but the question here is as to the general scope and sweep of the whole. "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. And the Catholic Faith is this," &c. "He, therefore, that will be saved *must thus think of the Trinity*." (*Ita sentiat*) "Is to think thus;" or "let him think thus." The whole Creed is governed by the first clause. The Church speaks with no uncertain voice. She leaves no option in the matter; and "is to think," "let him think," or "must think" have little or no appreciable differences of meaning here. Dr. Swainson labours hard to establish a similar discrepancy or "offensive" departure

will find that his own text gives, not διαχωρίζοντες, but μερίζοντες (p. 25).

from the Latin in another clause, but with even less success:—"Ita ut per omnia Unitas in Trinitate et Trinitas in Unitate veneranda sit;" which, he contends, ought to be translated, "may be worshipped" (p. 80), instead of "is," or, "ought to be worshipped," contrary to the whole purpose of the Creed and the ordinary rules of syntax.

But though Dean Stanley is perfectly willing to go along with Dr. Swainson in his attacks upon the Athanasian Creed—though he is perfectly willing to quote his authority for stigmatizing it as "an imperfect and corrupted version," the Dean sets no other value on his arguments. Dr. Swainson thinks that by minute solvents and the application of a little bad grammar he may possibly work a revulsion of feeling in favour of the Creed. In these days of rough-and-ready work it is instructive to mark how timidly and yet triumphantly he congratulates himself when he has contrived to rasp off a little "of its stringency" from this or that most stringent assertion. If the Athanasian Creed could be defended by the tenderest possible regard for other men's theological corns and bunions, there is no scholar who ought to produce more striking—I was going to say, but that is a very inappropriate word

as applied to Dr. Swainson, more successful results. *Sed non his Pergama dextris.* Dean Stanley at once flings away, with supreme contempt, all such feeble palliatives. The anathemas, he says, are not "a mere separable adjunct, but are firmly incorporated at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the Creed." (P. 27.) "Necessary to everlasting salvation . . . clenches and nails every single part together into one indissoluble whole." (P. 28.)

Of the other objection urged by the Dean, and taken from the same source, I need say very little. For though he acknowledges that the expression, "*None is greater or less*" is more intelligible than "*nothing is greater or less*" (*nihil majus aut minus*) and prefers the latter as *more* Biblical, he at least admits that it is Biblical in some degree; and if so, it is neither heretical nor erroneous, as he had stated a few lines before. Both expressions are common in the Fathers. Both equally sound. "*Sicut nec Filius posterior aut minor est Patre, ita nec Spiritus Sanctus.*" (Fulgent. De Fide, B. M. P., ix. 73; compare also 167-8.) "*Hæc Trinitas unius est ejusdemque naturæ atque substantiæ; non minor in Singulis quam in omnibus, nec major in omnibus quam in Singulis.*" (Augustin. Epist. ii.



911.) "Non est ergo secundum divinitatem minor qui plenitudinem habet divinitatis et gloriæ." (Ambrose, De Fide, ii. 8.)

I come now at the conclusion of this part of my subject to that which must be considered as by far the most formidable of the Dean's objections—"the grossest" error of all in our authorized version of the Creed—and equally applicable to the original Latin, if the Latin be the original. This is, "the use of the modern word *Person*, as the equivalent of a phrase of essentially different meaning" (p. 38). The Dean unhappily is not more precise and careful in his language than he is in his theology;—no mean fault in one who is writing on so grave and solemn a subject as the Athanasian Creed. The natural inference from his language would be, that he regarded "person" as a word of recent origin; or that the "modern word *person*" was a slovenly expression for "the modern use of the word *Person*," or, more strictly still, "the modern incorrect use of the word *Person*." But how the modern incorrect use of the word "person" can by any ingenuity be twisted into a charge against the translators of the Athanasian Creed, who completed their work more than three centuries ago, it is not

easy to see. So the Dean at the expense of correctness, if not of honesty, thought better to word his charge in the form it now assumes. He cannot possibly imagine that the word *person* is a "modern word" in any strict sense; unless he means to tell us that the English of the New Testament is modern, and the Formularies of Faith put forth in the reign of Henry VIII. were composed in modern English. Is the Bible then heretical? Is it to be taken from the hands of the ignorant laity because it makes use of an expression more than once, the metaphysics of which are not clearly understood, and the use of which in modern times is liable to misapprehension? If it was not heretical and erroneous when used by the translators of the Bible, by what argument is it heretical and erroneous when used by the translators of the Creed? If the use of the word in the Bible does not detract from the importance of the Bible, or justify our rejection of it, why should it be otherwise with the Creed?

But when Dean Stanley reprobates "the use of the modern word 'person' "<sup>1</sup> in our present version of

<sup>1</sup> Of course, if the Dean were consistent, he must, on the same ground, reject the Litany: "Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three *persons* and one God," and the Preface for Trinity Sunday in the Communion Service.

the Creed, I would fain know whether he considers that this word is or is not a fair and honest translation of the Latin *persona* ; if not, what would he substitute in its place, as more clear and more conformable to the original? The word *persona* as applied to the Trinity, had been in use from time immemorial. It had been sanctioned by Councils long before the Nicene Council. It would be the veriest impertinence to produce evidence of this assertion, and Dean Stanley cannot be ignorant of the fact. I repeat my question. If the interpretation of *persona* by the translators of the Creed be gross and erroneous, what other translation would Dean Stanley substitute in its place? I challenge him to tell the world: I call upon him to make good his accusation. But in fact it is not the word "person," but the word "*persona*" that he hates. To be consistent he must do so. For he cannot suppose that the poor African Christians in the days of Tertullian or Cyprian, or that the mixed population of Poitiers and Milan, understood more of the metaphysics of *persona* than an educated Christian man or woman of these days understands of the word "person." With his enlarged notions of the charity and enlightenment of this nineteenth century, he is

not prepared to assert that the men and women of the third and fourth centuries were better informed as to their creed and the doctrine of the Trinity than the men and women of this generation? If he shrinks from this assertion, his censure reaches higher than our present version of the Athanasian Creed and its objectionable use of the word "person." It reaches every Father, and every Council; it strikes at the whole Western Church, which from age to age has not only sanctioned the use of the word *persona* as applied to the Trinity, but has again and again insisted on it. If it be the mark of the Beast in the Athanasian Creed, and a symbol of persecution, then the whole Church, East and West, has been engaged in this ungodly strife, and Dean Stanley is the only example of wisdom and toleration raised up for the special enlightenment of this generation.

But how stands it with Dean Stanley's favourite hypothesis? If the Athanasian Creed were a song of triumph composed by some theological and orthodox Deborah <sup>1</sup> among the followers of Clovis or Charlemagne, the author of it would not have troubled himself or herself about the metaphysics of "Person"

<sup>1</sup> P. 9.

and "Substance," as the Dean inconsiderately argues (like a Communist general, perfectly unconcerned how his troops may be firing into each other's faces), but would have confined herself to expressions in their popular and general use. Let the Dean take his choice; either the Creed is not a war-song, and all that he has said on that point is useless and idle parade, or if it is a war-song it is not intentionally metaphysical, and all his metaphysical objections are waste of ink and paper. But, after all, the question is not whether the Creed be metaphysical or warlike, or how it came into the Western Church, but whether it enunciates the truth, and that in terms sufficiently intelligible for the mass of Christian congregations. If the word "Person" be so obscure that no two persons can be found to agree in its meaning, after careful examination; if it be so beclouded with metaphysical subtlety that no plain man can derive instruction from it, there might be a reason for changing it, though not for banishing the Athanasian Creed from our Prayer Book. But this would not satisfy Dean Stanley or his followers of the Broad Church. The most strict and immaculate rendering of *Persona* would have no more effect in regaining their allegiance to the Creed than the

milk and water cure of Dr. Swainson. It certainly would not,—for, as they have never given themselves the trouble to understand what is meant by *Persona* in the Latin Creed, they are equally content to be ignorant of what "Person" means in the English translation. This is clear and undeniable; for Dean Stanley himself, after arguing about the word for two pages and more, and displaying his skill in Greek, Latin, and English philology, comes out of his disquisition as wise as he entered it, and leaves his readers in the same pleasant predicament. He is not sure whether *person* means character, individual, particular man or woman, a thinking being, or a mask, or in short what it means, or whether it has any meaning. And yet he has the modesty and the candour to tax the Athanasian Creed with using a gross and erroneous expression. If the Dean cannot tell what is the true meaning of the word, how can he tell whether the Creed violates the right meaning? He may perhaps very candidly assure us that if he cannot tell neither can any one else, and that is a sufficient argument for not retaining it. Perhaps so; perhaps no one can fathom the full depth of the profound mystery connected with this word, or many other words in Scripture; certainly they will not, or

any depth at all, if they approach them in Dean Stanley's spirit.

To explain—no one, I think, will presume to say that those who believe the Athanasian Creed deny the unity of the Godhead, or that the acceptance of that Creed has ever given occasion to polytheism. "The Catholic Faith is this, that we worship," or, "that we are to worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity." And again, "Not three Gods but one God." But in Scripture the same authority, divinity, and power are ascribed to Christ, as are ascribed to God the Father; and Christ, whilst here upon earth, claimed the same for Himself. Being found in the fashion of a man and in the form of a servant—form and fashion in which the Father is not found—He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. The same pre-eminence is ascribed to the Holy Ghost, who came down in the shape of a dove and of fiery tongues—shapes not assumed by the Father or the Son.<sup>1</sup>

To denote these distinctive impersonations of the Godhead—to prevent men from thinking that these were phantasms or emanations merely—the Creed adopted a word already long in use—"person." To caution men against the errors of the Sabellians, who

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, p. 21.

taught that the Son and the Holy Spirit were only manifestations of one and the same divine Person, it inserted the clause "There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost." When therefore Dr. Johnson defined the word by "individual"<sup>1</sup> he defined it correctly, according to strict philological and theological use. Individual (*individuum*), that which is singular (*per se subsistens*), as opposed to that which is common or universal; e.g. a single or individual man, as opposed to the whole company of men; a single or individual angel, as opposed to the whole and undistinguished host of Heaven. "How entirely remote this is," says Dean Stanley, propounding Dr. Johnson's definition, "either from the Greek *hypostasis* or the Latin *persona* it is needless to point out." With Dean Stanley's leave it is very needful to point out, seeing that this is exactly the definition of *hypostasis* given by S. Basil: Οὐσία δὲ καὶ ὑπόστασις ταύτην ἔχει τὴν διαφορὰν, ἣν ἔχει τὸ κοινὸν πρὸς τὸ καθ' ἕκαστον οἶον, ὡς ἔχει τὸ ζῶον πρὸς τὸν δέινα ἄνθρωπον (Epist. 236, § 6).

"There is," he says, "the same difference between

<sup>1</sup> Johnson's definition is so correct, even in its theological sense, that he might have quoted S. Augustine in support of it. "*Persona* generale nomen est, in tantum, ut etiam homo possit hoc dici cum tantum intersit inter hominem et Deum."—De Trin., p. 1311.



essence (or substance) and *hypostasis* (or person) as there is between the common and the singular (*i.e.* the individual). Wherefore we acknowledge one and the same essence in the Godhead, in such a way that the definition of essence [in each *person*] admits of no difference; and we acknowledge an individualizing (*ιδιάζουσα*) *hypostasis*, in order that our conception of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost may be clear and free from confusion." And again in his Epistle 38, § 3, "Hoc igitur *hypostasis* est, non indefinita essentiae notio, quæ ob communitatem rei significatæ nullam sedem reperit, sed quæ quod commune in aliqua re et incircumscriptum est per conspicuas proprietates restringit ac circumscribit." So, to take an illustration intelligible and familiar to all, Dean Stanley has the common essence, nature, and substance of a man, but he has certain peculiarities which mark him off and insulate him from the rest of his fellows; as his personal appearance—(see how unconsciously we slide into the word *person* notwithstanding its dreadful metaphysics)—his dignity as Dean of Westminster, his authorship of a notorious book on the Athanasian Creed, and the like. These constitute his individuality or personality; these circumscribe and hedge him in from the common herd or undistinguished essence of mankind.

Or if you like the definition of Locke,<sup>1</sup> a much more muddle-headed philologist than Dr. Johnson, and say that "a person is a thinking, intelligent being, that has reason and reflection,"—what a hubbub of words!—"and can consider itself as itself"—I do not understand how it should consider itself to be something else than itself; but that is for the Whigs and the admirers of Locke to explain;—if, I say, we take this definition, we may yet draw a tolerable theological good sense out of it, and refer it to the usual definition of person or *hypostasis*: "Hypostasis significat id quod seorsim et per se existit, qualia sunt individua substantiarum." (Leontius, B. M. P., ix. 669.) "Hypostasis est et dicitur persona separata." (Anastasius, Sin. ib. 814, p. 681), and so of a hundred others.<sup>2</sup>

I have already spent more time on this subject than will please the majority of my readers, but I trust they will allow me, for the Dean's sake, to treat him with an extract out of one of his favourite Carolingian warriors. It is from Alcuin, in the form of a catechism, and might do much towards clearing

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> So also the Augsburg Confession: "We understand by the word *person* not a part, or a quality in another, but that which is self-supported, 'selbst bestehet,' *quod proprie subsistit*.

up the popular misconceptions of the Athanasian Creed.

*Q.* In what way is it that God is truly Unity and truly Trinity?  
—*Rep.* He is Unity in substance and Trinity in the [3] Persons.

*Q.* What is peculiar to each Person in the Holy Trinity?  
—*Rep.* It is peculiar to the person of the Father that He alone is the Father, and is of none other but Himself. It is peculiar to the Son that He is the begotten of the Father, God of God (*solus a solo*), co-eternal and consubstantial with the Father. It is peculiar to the Holy Spirit that He is not unbegotten [like the Father] nor begotten like the Son, but proceeds equally from the Father and the Son. . . . .

*Q.* Ought the Father by Himself (*solus*), or the Son by Himself (*solus*), or the Holy Ghost *per se*, to be called full and perfect God?  
—*Rep.* Yes; the Father is of Himself perfect God; similarly the Son is perfect God, and the Holy Ghost is perfect God.

*Q.* If every Person by Himself can be said to be perfect God, why do we not call the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, three Gods?  
—*Rep.* Because the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one substance, and not three substances. Accordingly the unity of the substance forbids us to say we believe that there are three Gods. . . . .

*Q.* Are the works of the Holy Trinity (*i.e.* as such) inseparable?  
—*Rep.* Yes; for whatever the Holy Trinity works, it works inseparably; for there is one operation of the Trinity, as there is one substance, essence, and will.

*Q.* Is the Holy Trinity, in reference to the three Persons, to be called inseparable or separable, seeing the Father is one, the Son another, the Holy Ghost another?  
—*Rep.* In Person the Father is truly another than the Son, as the Son in Person is another than the Father, and the Holy Ghost is another in Person from the Father and the Son.”—(*Alcuin. de Trinit. Quest. ad Fred.*)

I know not how this explanation will appear to

the Dean, or whether he will still contend that it is impossible to draw from it a plain and consistent meaning, comprehensible to ordinary minds. If the Dean says it is still obscure, and difficult to be made so clear and precise as that no one shall mistake it, so, I answer, is everything that relates to so high and mysterious a subject. So is the Apostles' Creed, so is the Catechism, so is that answer in the Catechism which the Dean does not object should be put into the mouth of every Christian child: "What dost thou chiefly learn in these articles of thy belief?—*Answer.* First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me, and all the world. Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind. Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God." These are the several operations of the three Persons in the Holy and Undivided Trinity. Will Dean Stanley say they must be placed "in the list of notions 'unsound,' 'not clear,' 'fantastical,' and 'ill-defined'?"

I regret that I should have had to detain my readers so long on these preliminary topics; but, in fact, the whole gist of the question between us turns upon them. It matters not whether Broad Church-

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men declare that "person," in the sense of individual, is a grave heresy,<sup>1</sup> or whether, broad or narrow, they object to calling the third person "a separate Being,"<sup>2</sup> or whether this man or that is led astray by his misconception of two most important words in the Athanasian Creed. Nothing else was to be expected, and nothing else but vagueness, inaccuracy, and confusion, as to the great and cardinal doctrines of the Christian Faith, are likely to prevail, in the growing contempt of the Clergy for Creeds and Articles, and dogmatic theology. Dean Stanley could never have fallen into the blunders exhibited by his remarks on the Creed if he had studied the subject with half the attention he would give to a work of Renan. And if Dean Stanley, summoned by Royal command to purge the Prayer Book and decide on the fate of the Athanasian Creed—or, at least, acting and talking as if he had been—displays such grievous ignorance of the literary and theological history of the question, what greater confidence can we have in any of his fellow Commissioners, some of whom had never opened a page of Athanasius in their lives, or knew anything of the Creed, beyond its appearance in the Prayer

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 22.

Book? If such men, selected from their fellows, appointed to represent the theology of the Church and nation, spoke neither well nor wisely, when they approached the subject of the Athanasian Creed, what are we to expect from the babblings of the vulgar? Why should the Dean pelt us with a farrago of all the foolish remarks which have escaped from unwise lips on the subject? The question is: Is the Creed erroneous? Is it heretical? Is it contrary to the universal testimony of the Church, and "the most certain warrants of Holy Scripture"? If it is,—if Dean Stanley can make this appear, *actum est*, we want not the idle gossip of thoughtless clergymen or ignorant laymen to slay the slain. But if he cannot show this, if the Creed be in accordance with Holy Scripture, if it represents accurately and faithfully the teaching of the Church and the Fathers, what use is there in telling us that Archbishop Tillotson, or Secker, or Burnet, or Baxter, was offended with the Athanasian Creed? Wise and good men have their infirmities, and Secker, Tillotson, and Burnet would have condemned what Athanasius, Augustine, and Basil approved. Until, therefore, the Dean can show that the teaching of the Creed is erroneous and

heretical—not, that is, what he calls error and heresy, but what is contradictory to Scripture and the Church's teaching—he wastes his own time and ours. If the Creed is not true and Scriptural, let him prove it, and we will spare him the necessity of proving it to be uncharitable. But if it be true, it cannot be uncharitable, unless the Dean thinks that truth and charity are opposed ; or unless charity, in his mind, is independent of truth. And this brings me to his remarks on the damnatory clauses, as he is pleased to call them.

But before I proceed to this part of the inquiry I must take a last look at Dr. Swainson. In his remarks on the Creed he has propounded a theory not altogether new, but brought by him into greater prominence. He has accused the Reformers of introducing errors, tautology, and heretical assertions into the Creed. “Circumstances occurred about this time” (says Dr. Swainson<sup>1</sup>)—“that is, about the year 1542—which threw our Reformers off their guard, and induced them to modify seriously the translations of the Creed, which some of them must have been instrumental in editing in the reign of Henry [VIII.] . . . The fact was that the com-

<sup>1</sup> P. 22.

plers of our Prayer Book *were misled by a Greek Creed*, published at Basle, about the year 1540, into the supposition that this Greek was the original, and the received Latin merely an imperfect translation; and the version which has been current among us since the year 1549 has been a translation from this Greek copy." He adds that "a book in Greek on the procession of the Holy Spirit came to Paris, which (as was thought) set the matter at rest," and then he gives what professes to be a quotation from Genebrard, in the following words:—"This book was given to Lazarus Bayffius, the ambassador of our King Francis I. at Venice, by the Greek Bishop *Zienensis Firmiensis*,<sup>1</sup> in the year 1533. And this book contained a Greek copy

<sup>1</sup> As my readers may well start at such a formidable name, even in a Greek Bishop, as *Zienensis Firmiensis*, two adjectives with never a substantive, I may state that it exists only in the imagination of Dr. Swainson. As he copied the Latin incorrectly, either from Genebrard or Waterland, I give so much of it as is necessary here: "Hoc symbolum reperi (*i.e.* I Genebrard), in libro Græco MS. de processione Spiritus Sancti, quem Lazaro Bayffio oratori regis Francisci I. apud Venetos, obtulit Dionysius Græcus, Episcopus Zienensis et Firmiensis, an. 1533," &c. That is, "I Genebrard, found this Creed" (meaning a Greek copy of the Athanasian Creed) "in a Greek MS. on the Procession of the Holy Spirit, which Dionysius, a Greek, Bishop of Zea and Firmium, gave to Lazarus Bayff," &c. It was not a printed book, as Dr. Swainson's translation might lead the reader to



of the Creed; and nearly allied to it was another copy which Nicolas Bryling published at Basle, and afterwards Henry Stephens, at Paris, in the year 1565."

As our authorized version of the Athanasian Creed appeared in 1549, we are not concerned with Henry Stephens's reprint, which will be found in most editions of the works of Athanasius, with the MS. copies of Genebrard and others. The fact therefore of "the compilers of our Prayer Book being misled by a Greek Creed published at Basle about the year 1540," rests entirely upon the supposition that such a Greek Creed was published by Bryling about the year 1540, and was used by the Reformers. No such copy, as far as I can discover, has ever been seen. It was not known to the Benedictine editors of the works of Athanasius, who published, in default of it, the edition of Stephens, or to Dr. Waterland, or to Dr. Swainson. In the absence of better information Waterland set it down

infer, and has led Dean Stanley into positively asserting (p. 13). Bayff's MS. was not printed until 1569 by Genebrard (see Waterland), with collations from the printed copies, which he tells us were to be found in all parts of Europe, and had been collated with the Latin by George Wicelius. It is clear, therefore, that Bayff's copy could have had no influence on our present version.

on conjecture as printed in 1540, "rather than set no year at all," as he says; and on this slender hypothesis Dr. Swainson ventures to affirm "that the compilers of our Prayer Book were misled by a Greek Creed published at Basle about the year 1540" (p. 22). But further, as Dr. Swainson had never seen a copy of Bryling, and the Benedictine editors had not given a complete collation of its readings,—for the best of all reasons, that they had never seen it,—Dr. Swainson composes a text of Bryling for himself, such as he thinks the Reformers might have seen—and then he determines by this text how far they corrupted their English version by the Greek! Dr. Swainson is far too serious and excellent a man to venture upon a joke, otherwise it might be suspected that he was rather playing on the credulity of his readers, than seriously intending to convince their judgment. It may be that Bryling's copy appeared in 1540, but that is quite uncertain. It may be that Bryling's text was seen by the Reformers, but that is a gratuitous assumption for which no evidence exists; but it is morally certain they never could have seen Dr. Swainson's Bryling, as it did not exist until 1870, and their work was done in 1549. Therefore to accuse them of corrupting the

English version by adhering to a Greek text which, in the form presented to us by Dr. Swainson, had no existence till the year of grace, 1870, is the funniest way of manufacturing history and criticism I ever remember to have seen.

But, says Dr. Swainson, "the Reformers were induced to modify seriously the translations of the Creed, which some of them *must* have been instrumental in editing in the reign of Henry." It would be futile to demand the proofs of so positive an assertion, for Dr. Swainson has none to give. He has, indeed, printed an English version of the Creed which appeared in a Collection of Hymns and Collects published without date, by Edward Whytechurch, "in or about 1542," says Dr. Swainson. But this date is purely hypothetical, and is, besides, by no means probable. These collects and prayers of Whytechurch have no invocations to saints, no doctrinal indications that would lead us to suppose they were set forth earlier than the reign of Edward VI.<sup>1</sup> Even if they were, how does Dr.

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<sup>1</sup> In 1545 Whytechurch was in partnership with Grafton, and in that year he had special licence, in conjunction with Grafton, to publish the Primer of that year. The Primer of 1545 is as great an advance on Hilsey's Primer of 1539, as Whytechurch's psalms and collects are on the Primer of 1545.

Swainson propose to show that the editor or editors of this compilation *must* have been engaged in 1548 in preparing our present version? By what authority does he venture to assert, without the least qualification, that this version was "put forth amongst the hymns of the Church about *four* years (it should be *six*, on his own showing) before the death of Henry VIII."? (p. 21). Whytechurch claims no such authority for his little work, which, for aught that appears to the contrary, was a private speculation, like many others of a similar nature.<sup>1</sup>

With the version of Whytechurch he couples another put out by Hylton, Bishop of Rochester, and reprinted at Oxford in 1834. As it appears by the title of Hylton's book, "The Manual of Prayers set forth by John, *late* Bishop of Rochester," that the Bishop was dead before his Manual was given to the world, it is not very clear how the poor man could have been instrumental in corrupt-

<sup>1</sup> The full title of his work is as follows: "The Psalter of David, in English, truly translated out of Latyn, &c. Whereunto is annexed in thende certayne godly prayers throwe-out the whole yere, commonly called collectes." At the end is, "The Crede or Symbole of Doctour Athanasius, dayley red in the Churche, called *Quicumque vult*."

ing with his brother Reformers the ancient and purer version, as Dr. Swainson imagines. Nor is there any reason for supposing that Hylton's work, composed for the use of his diocese, was compiled by any other person than himself. Dr. Swainson was misled by the phrase, "*The Creed of Athanasius*," daily read in the Church," which did not mean, and could not mean, any of these unauthorized versions of the Creed—for in the reign of Henry VIII. the service was in Latin—but the Latin Creed. This imputation therefore against the Reformers has no foundation except in imagination.

Nor is Dr. Swainson more successful in his other imputation that the Reformers in 1548 were thrown off their guard "by a Greek Creed published at Basle about the year 1540." Eight years is a tolerably lengthy period for men to recover their composure; especially for men, like the Reformers, who must have grown familiar with such operations. But in this case they had not ten years, but four-and-twenty to look about them.

As early as the year 1524 a Greek edition of the Athanasian Creed was published at Strasburg by a Greek named Johannes Leontonikes, at the

end of a Greek Psalter.<sup>1</sup> Considering the intimacy of the Reformers with the people of Strasbourg, especially with Capito and Bucer, they were quite as likely to be acquainted with this copy of the Greek as with Bryling's. This edition has the same curious misreading as is found in Baiff's copy published by Genebrard: ἀλλὰ σῶαι αἱ τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις, for πᾶσαι, by an evident transposition of the letters. In other respects it neither agrees exactly with Baiff nor with Bryling. The fact is important, for we have thus another Greek copy of the Creed coming from an independent source, substantiating the text which approaches nearest to the Latin version. Nor is this all that can be urged in favour of a Greek original. In a collection of the Orthodox Greek Fathers published by Leo Allatius in 1652, this Creed is quoted by two writers with slight verbal alterations; first by Joan. Plusiadenus (Allatius I. 628<sup>b</sup>), and then by Joan. Veccius or Beccius, who lived in the thirteenth

<sup>1</sup> "Wolf: Cephal. αφεδ." (i.e. 1524) 12mo. A copy of this rare volume is in the British Museum. Cephal is Capito, the celebrated reformer.

<sup>2</sup> ὅστις ἀν βούληται σωθῆναι, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, φησὶν (sc. Athanasius ἐν τῇ ὁμολογίᾳ τῆς ἐαυτοῦ πίστεως) ἀπὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, οὐ ποιητὸν, οὐ κτιστὸν οὐδὲ γεννητὸν, ἀλλ' ἐκπορευτὸν.

century (Ib. ii. 531<sup>1</sup>). The use of the word *ἐκπορευτὸν* by one, and of *ἐκπορευόμενον* by the other, affords a strong presumption that each of these writers was quoting from a different MS. of the Creed. Here then is concurrent and independent testimony in favour of a Greek original, which cannot be overthrown by the fact that other Greek copies depart so widely from this standard as to render it certain that the Greek was translated from the Latin, and not the Latin from the Greek. Such variations may be either paraphrases or more popular versions, as the Creed was not admitted into the Greek Church, just as the uniformity of the Latin copy (supposing it were a translation, and not the original) may be accounted for by the fact that when it was once received into the Western Church there was no inducement or even permission to alter it.

As to the argument, that no early Greek copies have been found of the Creed, the same objection would apply to the genuine works of Origen and Irenæus. As to the supposition that if Athanasius

<sup>1</sup> ὁ ἅγιος Ἀθανάσιος ἐν τῇ, ὁμολογίᾳ τῆς αὐτοῦ πίστεως φησὶν· τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ ἐστὶν οὐ ποιητὸν, οὐ κτιστὸν, οὐ γεννητὸν ἀλλ' ἐκπορευόμενον.

had been its author, it would have been undoubtedly quoted by his contemporaries and his immediate successors in their disputes with the Arians and Sabellians, there is this to be said : First, whether it would be quoted or not would depend upon the light in which it was regarded by the orthodox Fathers. If they looked upon it as a psalm or hymn, it is quite possible that they might have passed it over and confined themselves to those passages in the writings of Athanasius which, instead of barely stating the truth, as the Creed does, were more argumentative and more logical. But, secondly, it is not by any means certain that they would have quoted it, supposing they knew that it had proceeded from the pen of Athanasius. Does S. Basil or S. Gregory of Nyssa, or Gregory of Nazianzum, or S. Chrysostom, or S. Ambrose, or S. Augustine, or Gregory the Great, quote the writings of Athanasius in their controversial discussions ? Is it usual with them, or with their immediate successors, to meet the Arian or Sabellian by quotations from Athanasius, or generally from the Fathers ? Better scholars than I—a desultory and haphazard reader—can speak more positively than I can venture to speak, but it does not appear to me to have been the

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practice of the Fathers generally thus to meet their opponents, not even long after the fourth century ; nor can I imagine they would have attempted anything so unreasonable. For though we may think highly of Athanasius and defer to his authority, why should an Arian or a Sabellian show the same respect? What was Athanasius to them? Had they not bishops and ecclesiastics of their own, quite as learned and popular, in their estimation, as Athanasius himself? Had not their sect drawn after them half the host of Heaven? *Plures hæretici, pauci Catholici*, had been the condition of the Church not only when Athanasius woke up to find himself in opposition to all the world, but for centuries after. If the questions in dispute were to be decided, they could only be decided by pure arguments, and not by authority ; by convincing the world that Scripture could only be consistently interpreted according to the orthodox belief. And never was any great question at any time, affecting the profoundest and most essential doctrines of the Christian faith, more thoroughly sifted, in its minutest particulars and subtlest shades of meaning, or more carefully studied, than in this controversy ; never were disputants more learned, earnest, and acute on both sides, with

intellects better trained and disciplined, more keen in perceiving the least flaw in the arguments of their opponents, or more ready to discover what could strengthen their own. It was a controversy exclusively as to the meaning of Scripture, and by appeals to Scripture alone, and not to authority, could it be decided. Nor, on the whole, was ever any controversy more salutary to the Church, compelling the Church, as it did, to fix its attention on the text and the literal interpretation of Scripture, exercising the intellects of men on the highest of all truths, and obliging them to throw aside those fanciful interpretations in which they were otherwise apt to indulge. Consequently, whilst in their meditative and expository writings the Fathers, both of the Greek and the Latin Church, are often fantastical, illogical, erratic, and unsatisfactory, their controversial writings are the reverse; just that reverse which might be expected in men who have to put forth all their powers in defence of a real cause against a real adversary. And—not to weary my readers by insisting too much upon this topic—the advantage thus gained for substantiating the text and the genuineness of Scripture was immense. The insertion of spurious books and spurious texts was

effectually prevented. From the very commencement of the dispute it became impossible among such active and watchful opponents, preternaturally on the alert to seize upon any verse or any reading favourable to the cause they espoused, to palm upon the world a verse or an expression which did not rest on sufficient authority.

The objection, therefore, plausible as it seems, that if Athanasius had been the author of the Creed, it would have been quoted by those who were engaged in similar controversies, is not only of little value, but really betrays ignorance of the controversies of the times, and of the manner in which they were conducted. I do not affirm that Athanasius was the author of the Creed. I cannot say whether he is the author only in the same sense as the Apostles are the authors of the Apostles' Creed; but the popular arguments alleged against that authorship are far from satisfactory; and the fact that so able a scholar as Dr. Newman (more competent than any other to pronounce an opinion on this subject) should have referred to the Creed without question, as the composition of S. Athanasius,<sup>1</sup> should have arrested the attention of a

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, p. 59.

thoughtful writer. The Dean sees none of these difficulties. It is indifferent to him whether the Creed was composed in the reign of Clovis or of Charlemagne. He is willing to accept either, neither, or both. Sometimes he prefers Clovis, sometimes Charlemagne, and sometimes a later date. It does not seem astonishing to him that so masterly a summary of the testimony of the Church upon the most profound and mysterious of all doctrines, in language so harmonious<sup>1</sup> that it might be taken for a hymn, so measured, and yet so precise as no Creed can be more so, should have been produced by some obscure writer in the ninth or tenth century, of whom no one ever heard; that it should have imposed upon Alcuin, Hincmar, and other contemporary authors, should have been accepted by bishops and enjoined in their visitations, not as something new, but common and familiar—that the discovery, if discovery it was, should never have been regarded as such, never heralded with the

<sup>1</sup> Take, for instance, that clause in the Creed, "of a *reasonable soul* and human flesh subsisting." Was that a heresy which troubled the Western Church in the ninth and tenth century, though it did in the days of Origen and Athanasius? See Origen *De Principiis*, p. 469, ed. Lammatzsch. Was it likely to have occurred to a contemporary of Alcuin or Hincmar?

pomp that might have been expected, or been denounced as a forgery. If, on the other hand, it is attributed to Vigilius of Thapsus, and the age of Clovis, precisely the same arguments will hold good as against the claims of Athanasius. There is the same silence of antiquity, the same non-appearance of the Creed in the controversial writings of the times.

Whatever theory be accepted, whether of its earlier or its later origin, the subject presents equal difficulties, and must do so until we are better acquainted than we are at present with the history of the Greek texts. Whether indeed our English translators were, as Dr. Swainson affirms, misled by a Greek copy, or adopted or modified one or other of the vernacular translations then in use, I am not prepared to say.<sup>1</sup> That they did not strictly adhere to any one Greek copy with which we are acquainted is certain. That every one of the expressions against which he or Dr. Stanley protests, as erroneous and heretical, were in common and familiar use in the Latin Church, were as correct and orthodox as those which Dr. Swainson prefers, I have shown before. To me the alterations, if

<sup>1</sup> See, however, the Appendix.

alterations they were, introduced by the Reformers, seem both more rhythmical and more precise.<sup>1</sup> But the reader may judge for himself by comparing the modern version with that given by Bishop Hylton. With Dr. Swainson's theory that this Creed ought to be considered as a sermon, and as an exposition of the Faith, delivered to candidates at baptism,<sup>2</sup> I am not concerned. I know of no evidence in favour of this presumption; quite the reverse. In every age of the Church the Apostles' Creed, or some exposition founded on the Apostles' Creed, was exclusively used on such occasions; whilst the Creed of Athanasius was confined to the priesthood, the higher ranks of the secular clergy, and the regulars.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> That the Reformers were not induced to believe, as Dr. Swainson says, that the Creed was the genuine composition of Athanasius, and for that reason preferred the Greek copies, is, I think, clear, from the fact that not only Bullinger, in his *5 Decades Sermonum*, published in 1557, adheres to the older Latin version, so does Hooper, and so do others; but in the Augsburg Confession the Latin copy is used, and the German professes to be a version from the Latin, and not from the Greek.

<sup>2</sup> Swainson, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Ordo Romanus*, published by Hittorp, and attributed by him to the eighth century, in the *Sermo de Fide*, addressed to bishops on their consecration, occurs the following passage:—"Et in hac Trinitate nihil est prius aut posterius, nihil est minus aut majus, sed cœterni sibi sunt et cœquales. . . . Tres non confusi nec diversi." See also Martene, *De Ritibus*, ii. 59.

But after all the only real question at issue is the truth or falsehood of the Athanasian Creed, and it matters comparatively little or nothing, when, or how, or by whom it was composed—whether Greek or Latin originals presided at the birth of our present version. Dr. Stanley's forces are reserved for the "Athanasian anathemas," as he calls them. Against these he is most charitably wrathful; of these he is most liberally intolerant. Anxious for the comprehension of Greek, Arian, Sabellian, and the like; willing to put upon their errors and their exclusiveness the most mild, vague, and indulgent construction, he has for the Athanasian Creed, and these clauses of it, none but the narrowest, fiercest, and most fanatical interpretation. The spirit that would prompt him to find a Catholic meaning in a statement derogatory to our Lord's divinity, or to the Procession of the Holy Spirit, leads him, in the case of the Athanasian Creed, to find an uncharitable purpose in its most innocent expressions, and pervert its meanings into deliberate sentences of damnation. "Terrific penalties laid down in the Creed of S. Athanasius" (p. 46). "Terrible denunciations" (p. 41). "Frightful pains both in this world and the next"

(p. 31). "Curses" (p. 27). "This tremendous repudiation of heresy" (p. 29). "The inevitable forerunner of everlasting destruction" (p. 31). "Savage temper against heretics" (p. 33).

These are a few of the choice flowers of rhetoric which the Dean—the mildest man on earth and the most intense hater of intolerance—applies to the Athanasian Creed and its authors. Is that Creed susceptible of a higher and more Catholic meaning? He is at no pains to consider. Is he inconsistent in his accusations? It gives him no concern. If we are to believe the Dean, the framers of the Creed had no other object in view than the damnation of heretics, and found in the Athanasian Creed the fittest expression of those sentiments whereby "the slaughtering and burning alive of the very persons whom these clauses were supposed to condemn" constituted a most acceptable sacrifice to the mercy and justice of the Almighty.

Now how far this may be considered as a just and impartial estimate of the general purpose and teaching of the Athanasian Creed, or what expressions there may be in the Creed to justify such odious imputations, it would be idle to inquire. The Creed contains no anathema. The word dam-



nation does not occur in it. It stands in striking contrast in this respect to the Nicene and other confessions of Faith, as they appeared in their earliest shapes. It does not even assume that form of denunciation of which examples are by no means uncommon in the early Church. It never says, "Whosoever will not accept the Catholic Faith, let him be *anathema*," i.e. "let him be accursed;" but "whosoever will not accept the Catholic Faith he cannot be saved." That is at best the expression of an opinion only, not of a wish, still less of a denunciation. And if the Church is fully convinced that the Athanasian Creed is in strict accordance with the Catholic Faith—that is, the way of salvation, as understood by it in all ages, as committed to its keeping by Christ Himself—those warnings—for warnings they are, and not anathemas—are not only just but charitable. The Church is bound to raise up its voice, like the Prophet, and cry aloud to its children,—“This is the way, walk ye in it;” if it believes that it is the right way, and cannot and ought not to hold its peace, and that for the highest motives of charity, the salvation of souls. If I were to see a man walking on the edge of a precipice or in any path I was firmly convinced would lead to

his destruction, I should be bound in charity to warn him against his danger, and none could accuse me in so doing of condemning him to destruction. I may be wrong in my judgment, I may be needlessly solicitous for his safety. A happy accident, or the providence of God, or wiser and better thoughts, unknown to me, may intervene to save him from the peril I anticipated. But my warning is not the less valid, true, and charitable on that account; it is not less the dictate of the highest duty, and the right exercise of that knowledge which God has given me.

And if he and half a dozen others should escape, I should not less be bound, if I knew that it was a precipice, to continue to warn men against it on peril of their lives; and no one, except Dr. Stanley perhaps, would cry out against me for want of charity, or accuse me, if men did lose their lives, in spite of my warning, that I had been their "forerunner to everlasting destruction;" that through "the savageness of my denunciations" I had been instrumental to their ruin.

Assuming then that the Catholic faith—that is, Catholic or universal truth—is Christian truth or faith, and that the Athanasian Creed is in harmony

with it, as the Church assumes, and we have a right to assume until it is proved to be otherwise, what we have to consider is whether the rejection of that truth involves the danger of everlasting death, or involves it so far as to justify the Church in its expressions, that whosoever fails to keep it whole and undefiled "cannot be saved"—in other words, "shall perish everlastingly." And here I may remark, that whatever meaning Dean Stanley and others may fasten on the minatory clauses of the Creed, however they may fancy that they can trace in them an exclusive and persecuting spirit, if the Catholic faith be the Christian faith, it can have no such intentions. Such notions are the mere dreams and ugly fancies of Dean Stanley and his followers, which have no root except in their own imaginations. Like the Christian faith, the Creed cannot be supposed to condemn charity, temperance, mercy, the love of God, the desire to know and do His will, wherever and in whomsoever these may be found. It cannot be its purpose, any more than it was the purpose of its Divine Original, "to break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax." Like Christ Himself, it is everywhere and at all times on the side of truth and goodness; like Him, opposed to sin and false-

hood. Like Him it cries unto all: "Come unto Me," and excludes none. Like Him it warns those who hold the truth in unrighteousness; separates like Him the evil from the good; whatever form that evil takes, moral or intellectual. More than this; it is and must be charitable, merciful, tolerant, patient, liberal, forgiving; as all these virtues are and must be the inseparable companions of truth, as their opposites are the everlasting attendants of error. Therefore the Athanasian Creed (always supposing it to be true) cannot be justly chargeable with the odious imputations ascribed to it by Dean Stanley. It only looks so to him. The evil, the narrow, the persecuting spirit he sees in it is not there, but in himself. It is his truth, his charity, his forbearance that are at fault, and not the Creed.

I will not do Dean Stanley the injustice of supposing that the denial of the doctrine set forth in the Creed and the acceptance of it are equally true in his estimation. If one is true, the other must be false. If the Creed be false, let the Dean make it appear so. If it be true, then those who deny it deny the truth; and that is to them a loss, an injury (*damnum*), like any other falsehood, and cannot be otherwise; and a loss all the greater in

this instance as it is falsehood, error, and darkness in a matter of most vital concernment. Furthermore, if the error be perpetual, if it be persisted in, the loss and the evil are perpetual also. I think Dean Stanley himself will not deny this inference. He will not deny that they who hold erroneous or dishonourable notions of our Lord's nature, mission, and offices, with all their multitudinous consequences upon Christian life, faith, and practice, do entail upon themselves immeasurable loss and evil; and so long as they continue in their false notions, so long they suffer this irreparable injury. It may, indeed, happen through the goodness of God and the economy of His providence that they do not experience the full effects of that injury to their moral and their spiritual nature. For happily for us we are so formed and so constituted that we cannot, if we would, become utterly and entirely false in this world. For one falsehood a man tells he must utter a thousand truths; for one law that he breaks he must observe a thousand others. It cannot be otherwise. Then again if he is false in some things to the laws of his own nature, he is surrounded by thousands of natural laws to which he cannot, if he would, be false, and which he cannot falsify. And

we must suppose that, as there are thousands of natural laws superior to him, acting upon him in all directions, bringing him in conformity to their behests, even in spite of himself, and of all that he can do to transgress them, so there must be thousands of moral and spiritual laws and influences, over which he has no control, bringing him in some degree, however he may resist, into subordination to themselves ; and so counteracting the deadly effects of his sins, his passions, and his untruthfulness. So we witness deadly evils, physical, moral, and spiritual, existing in men, not working out at once, not at all so far as we can see in some cases, their natural effects, because they are kept in check by counteracting influences of an opposite and healthy nature. Yet, notwithstanding, the consequences of error and falsehood are in themselves evil, are everlastingly deadly ; and it is true to say absolutely that he who *continues* in them must suffer everlastingly. For Dean Stanley, I suppose, does not imagine that good and evil, falsehood and truth, shall coalesce, or that the war between good and evil shall go on for ever, or that it shall end in a drawn battle.

The wheat shall be gathered into the garner ; the

tares shall be burned up with unquenchable fire. The foundation of gold and precious stone shall stand ; that of hay and stubble shall be consumed.

The Dean will doubtless admit this ; but he will contend that the evil will not continue for ever ; for that it is not consistent with God's love and mercy that He should suffer any of His creatures to perish, or suffer the penalty of eternal death—in other words, “ perish everlastingly,” as the Creed declares ; and that for a theological opinion. Now, though I strongly object to the habit men have, at the present day, of substituting their own conceptions of God's nature and His dealings with men, for the knowledge we have of both as revealed in Scripture—the only knowledge of them we can have—and though these human conceptions must partake of the sin and imperfection of their original, and are just as apt to mislead us when applied to God's government and His spiritual kingdom as Bacon denounced them when applied to the kingdom of nature, I will suppose it to be as the Dean says ; I will suppose that God will not punish any man everlastingly ; and that what I should call the revelation of certain immutable facts and order of that spiritual kingdom is only, in the Dean's language, a theological dogma

or opinion. Nay, I will even go further than the Dean, and admit that God does not punish men at all, as those words are commonly understood; at least in any other sense than He punishes men for their transgressions of His laws, in the moral and the natural world. But then this is precisely the difficulty. If this life and the next be separated in imagination only, and not in reality; if one stage of life be the necessary preparation for another, how is any man to avoid the inevitable consequences of ignorance and falsehood, any more than he can avoid those of vice and excess? If he has been spending half his days in false conceptions of the Trinity, or of any other truths of Christianity, how can he not have incurred loss? He may be more diligent for the future, and his very loss may quicken his energies more than those of other men. But the loss is a loss, and no man who has become sensible to it can feel otherwise, however he may strive to repair it—a loss irreparable, and therefore in that sense everlasting. He who has built his house on hay and stubble must build again. His first foundation is lost, and so much of himself as he has put into it. He is worse off than if he had built truly and firmly at first, and always will be,



so far as human judgment can discern. If evil, falsehood, and wrong-doing are allowed to work out their inevitable consequences, if their progress in men or nations be not stopped by God's interference, if they grow from bad to worse as they must do, eating out the whole nature of man, and, like a field grown over with weeds, becoming more desolate and irreclaimable from year to year, what matters whether the sentence of eternal condemnation be passed upon them, at some stated time, in some formal way, as men suppose? Sentence is passed already, irrevocable, unalterable, everlasting; unless some power higher and superior to us descend to save us. And even so sentence is passed already on vice, sin, and false doctrine;—a judgment in itself eternal, and therefore everlasting death and punishment. For whatever separates a man from God, separates him from life, consigns him to death; and that separation is effected by whatever is opposite to God's nature; opposite, that is, to truth, holiness, justice, love, and purity. In His presence is life; out of His presence is death or damnation, *κρίσις*, that is, separation. God needs inflict no other punishment. He needs only to leave us to ourselves, and no hell, no damnation, can be worse, can be otherwise than perpetual.

And this applies equally to erroneous and heretical opinions in matters of faith as to errors in practice. For disguise it as men will, error is human and truth is divine; error is their own-will worship, their own way, their own law, and their own idolatry. Though they may have a multitude to bear them out, it cannot be Catholic, it must come to nothing and perish everlastingly. Our conceptions of a wise, omnipotent, and just God forbid us to think otherwise. For if error shall not perish everlastingly, then will error be everlastingly saved; and there is no essential difference between truth and error, but both are equally pleasing in God's sight. Then also it will follow that as error is everlastingly saved, it shall enter heaven; that is, the cause of all darkness, confusion, and disorder shall find its resting-place where nothing but light, harmony, and peace are known.

But Dean Stanley will deny this consequence. He will claim that *men* holding these errors (as *e.g.* the Sabellian, or Arian, or Greek) may be everlastingly saved, and need not hold the Catholic faith, because God, out of His mercy and consideration for the general piety of such men, will pardon their deflection from the right faith, I ask: How will

He pardon? By opening their eyes, or by allowing them to remain in ignorance? If by opening their eyes, then we come back to the assertion of the Creed: "Whosoever will be saved it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith." How or how long it shall be held the Creed does not define; nor is that material. It makes everlasting salvation dependent on that faith, and it is against this assertion that the objection is raised. If however God will pardon and accept and save the man everlastingly, and yet suffer him to remain in his error—a supposition inconceivable—we fall back upon the absurdity already noticed, and must then admit that evil is eternally saved. Again, if the Athanasian Creed be true, it must be immutably true. It is a revelation of facts in reference to the glorious Hierarchy in Heaven which existed before the earth began, and shall continue eternal and unchanged when the world is no more. It is the everlasting and beatific vision, the theme of praise and thanksgiving not only in this life, but in the life to come. Then either those who are worthy of that life must learn and take up that song with the Catholic Church, or be excluded from it; or, more correctly, exclude themselves from it by their

unbelief, so long at least as they continue in that unbelief. If Dean Stanley says God will open their eyes and take away that unbelief, I hope so too. But until that unbelief is taken away they are "perishing everlastingly," unless there is an everlasting life beyond that which Scripture reveals to us; an everlasting life where men shall deny the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit, as there is one where they shall see and acknowledge both.

I am not a little surprised that they who object to the Athanasian Creed, or rather its excluding clauses, on the ground of its uncharitableness and not of false doctrine—for with that I am not concerned until it can be proved—I am, I say, surprised that they do not see that their objection would reach much further than the Athanasian Creed and is as contrary to Scripture as it is to reason. "The soul that sinneth it shall die" is the plain declaration of Scripture. "Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," is distinctly affirmed by S. Paul—that is, he shall "perish everlastingly." Is this language less precise and less formidable than that which is used in the Creed? Might it not be interchanged without injury? For whether we say, "This is the Catholic faith without which no man shall see

the Lord," or whether we say, "Holiness, without which every man shall perish everlastingly," the expressions are in sense the same. But then, as every man sinneth, as every man has done evil, as no one is holy, all these passages, if pressed to their strict, apparent, and literal conclusion, are as exclusive and uncharitable as the objectionable clauses of the Creed ; and on the same ground that we reject the one must we reject the others. It cannot be said they demand of a Christian less than the Creed demands, they demand more. They are not less exclusive, but more. If it be said that S. Paul is setting up a standard of perfection towards which men should strive, but which they can never attain—if it be said that the Almighty for the merits of His Son will pardon the sins and shortcomings of men, and not exact of them that holiness, sinlessness, and absence of evil which these and other precepts seem to demand, and without which no man shall see His face, why, should not the same rule of interpretation be applied to the Creed ? Why are we to suppose that He will be less merciful to errors of faith than to errors of practice ; or that the Church, admitting the operation of His mercy in one, attempts to limit and deny

it in the other? Shall we condemn S. Paul either of falsehood or of uncharitableness because he asserts that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," seeing that no man is holy or can be? Or is his assertion false, because men are saved not only in their unholiness but in spite of it, and that upon the Apostle's own confession? Is this paltering with the Apostle's meaning or with the strict accuracy of his words? Then how can it be paltering with the words of the Creed, when we affirm that "except a man keep the Catholic faith he cannot be saved"? The course of the argument in both cases is the same. We leave it to God's mercy alone to determine how any man has kept the faith—what are his shortcomings, his difficulties, and his obstacles—God alone can determine the strict adjustment between the will and the deed. Yet the truth is not the less universally true, because the judgment of each man's individual faith and conduct must be left in God's hands, nor is the Church less bound to proclaim it. It is still true that without the Catholic faith be held men must perish everlastingly, though God may in His mercy save those who are not able to keep it "whole and undefiled." It is still true that "without holiness no man shall see the

Lord," though God has brought and does bring to the sight of Himself those who are diseased and defiled by sin.

But to consider the subject a little more narrowly. The whole purport of the Creed is expressed in the opening clauses, and the thought conveyed in those clauses Dean Stanley is justified in considering as affecting the Creed throughout, and not honestly to be separated from it. "Whosoever will be *saved*, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith ; which faith except every one do keep *whole and undefiled*, without doubt *he shall perish everlastingly*." The same sentiment is repeated at the close in nearly the same words—"This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved." All other expressions of the Creed insisting on the necessity of a right faith to salvation are included in these.

Now it is to be remarked, however positive and precise the statement may appear that "this is the Catholic Faith"—that is to say, this description of it as set forth in the Creed—the Church puts forth this exposition of it only on the assumption that what is stated by the Creed is the Catholic Faith—that is to say, the faith once delivered to the Church, and held

and defended by it in all ages. If it is not the Catholic faith—if the Church is mistaken in this assumption—the ground upon which the Creed is recommended to our acceptance is withdrawn. It is no longer Scriptural; it has no claims upon our obedience. The charge is a grave one in the lips of Dean Stanley, whether he intends to impute false teaching to the Church or want of charity. In fact, the one is necessarily implied in the other. By the Dean's reasoning we are involved in the following consequences: either the Church does not know what the Catholic faith is; or it is mistaken in supposing that the Athanasian Creed is agreeable to the Catholic faith; or the Catholic faith—that is to say, the faith of all Christians, the faith of Christ, the faith preached in the Gospel—is not necessary to salvation; in other words, we may be *saved*, without the truth. I do not here stop to inquire what meaning the Dean affixes to the word *saved*; whether he is using it in the sense that the Church employs it, or has troubled himself to ascertain whether he is using the word in one signification and the Church in another. One or other of these conclusions is inevitable on his mode of reasoning. If he accepts the first or the second of these consequences, he is bound to furnish



some better proofs for so doing than any he has produced in this pamphlet ; for I think that it has been conclusively shown that the Church is strictly correct in claiming for the Creed its perfect congruity with the faith held by the Fathers in all ages. " This is the Catholic Faith : " if it is not, it rests with Dean Stanley to show that this assertion is erroneous. That he has not shown, and I am fully convinced he never can show. If then the Church does know what is the Catholic faith and is right in assuming that the Athanasian Creed is in perfect agreement with that faith, nothing else remains for Dean Stanley except to assert that the Catholic faith or the Christian faith is not necessary to salvation ; and by that he may mean to say, either that it is not necessary at all—for men may be saved without it—or it is not necessary in its integrity. If he holds the former of these alternatives, he must reject the 18th Article as well as the Creed, and affirm in contradiction to it " that every man *shall* be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law ; " and this is what he seems to me to be perpetually insisting on.<sup>1</sup> But if he does not—if

<sup>1</sup> Dean Stanley and the Broad Churchmen blunder at this

he does not mean to assert that Christianity is useless, or (which is much the same) that salvation, in any large sense of the word, is as certain and easy of attainment without the belief in Christianity as with it—if he does not contend that it is indifferent whether a man be a Pagan or a Christian—if he attaches any significance whatever to the words of the Apostle; “*There is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved*” (Acts, iv. 12);—then must he adopt the other alternative; and his quarrel with the Athanasian Creed is not because of its general assertion of the necessity of the Christian faith, but of the necessity of keeping it “whole and undefiled.” Faith is necessary to salvation—faith whole and undefiled by error of any kind. That is, salvation (in the highest sense of the word) depends on the purity of faith, says the Church. The Dean affirms it article, as they do at other dogmatic expositions of the Church’s teaching. The article does not say that all men *shall be damned* who walk diligently according to the law, or sect, they profess, but that they shall not be saved by it. That is to say, if they are saved, they shall, by God’s goodness, be saved in spite of it. Dean Stanley would make God equally tolerant of error and of truth. The Church, more wise and holy, believes that God may pardon error, even though He has declared that *no evil shall dwell with Him*. But errors in faith are no evil in Dean Stanley’s estimation.

*does not.* Whom shall we believe? The Dean has nothing to urge in support of his view, except his own notions of God's mercy, his dislike (natural enough) that any man should forfeit salvation for an error of faith. But suppose a man acquiesces in error, and has no desire to be delivered from it; suppose that such deliverance forms no part of his prayers to Almighty God, does he not forfeit salvation? Is not the willingness to remain in error itself the loss of truth, or the loss of salvation? If, on the other hand, notwithstanding his error, he is yet possessed by the wish of escaping from it, praying for light in the darkness, as all men must, whatever their enlightenment; then if he be sincere he must come to the light—from an imperfect to a perfect faith—though we know not how or when; that is, he must come to the acknowledgment of the Catholic faith; the result is inevitable—he attains salvation.

But this is the Dean's great and grievous error throughout. He imagines a true faith and salvation are separable accidents; and as faith, in his estimation, is little better than the acceptance of a certain set of dogmatical statements, salvation is no better, in his mind, than an escape *hereafter* from eternal fire. Throughout his pamphlet I cannot

find that he attaches to the word saved (*quicumque vult salvus esse*) any higher or nobler meaning than this; or that he condemns the Athanasian Creed on any better ground than his own persuasion that the opposite of the word must mean nothing else than what he calls everlasting destruction or everlasting torment. It never occurs to him that faith is life; that faith is in itself salvation; that spiritual death—the death of the soul—is absence of faith, the cause of death in all its forms of sin, and error, and disobedience—in one word, separation from God, in whose presence alone there is life. He does not seem to me to understand that, if perfect faith were possible to man in this world, if man could believe in God with all his soul and all his strength, with no sense of weakness, no remembrance of sin, no accusation of the Devil to intervene and check it, there is no other life, no other salvation, man could wish for or require. For that communion with God would be perfect and uninterrupted, that communion of which the Psalmist says: “At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” But the misery of man, and the sole cause of his falling away from God, is the uncertainty of his faith, misgivings as to God’s nature, inordinate conceptions

of himself; his sins eclipsing his faith, his blinded faith leading him to sin. And as that falling away, that weak and blinded faith, is spiritual disease and death, the restoration of faith is health and salvation. Surely, without entering into any theological controversy on this matter, every man's own personal experience is sufficient to attest the truth of this: every man knows for himself, and of himself, if he ever thinks on such a subject, that the extremest of all misery he can suffer is the thought that he has through his own offences heaped up a wall of separation between himself and God—a separation which must remain for ever, for anything he can do to remove it—a separation, therefore, carrying in itself the sentence of eternal death.

If faith be not possible in this life, if in the Communion of Saints there be no communion with God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—then, of course, salvation is something future, and, in spite of God being “our Father,” in spite of His Son being “our Lord,” in spite of the indwelling of His Holy Spirit, we are eternally languishing and eternally perishing; there is for us here no resurrection, no life everlasting, no forgiveness of sins, and, therefore, no Communion of Saints; the Holy Spirit is

not Holy for us ; in the works of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit we have no real, actual part ; it is all to come—hope in the dim future, but no more. But if the conscience of Christendom, if the examples of saints and martyrs, if strength in weakness, resignation in suffering, recovery from sin, exaltation in forgiveness, protest and rebel against so unworthy a supposition, then not only is faith possible, but it is able to stretch out dumb hands and grasp the unspeakable blessings placed within its reach by the Trinity. Then it is possible that man by faith may hold communion with God here, made holy here through His holiness, saved eternally here through that salvation which Christ has brought near to him, dwelling in and with that Spirit which proceedeth from the Father and the Son. But how this communion is possible without faith, or with a faith *studiously* erroneous, I must leave Dean Stanley to explain. How men can trust in Christ's salvation who do not believe in Him or dwell in His spirit, and how errors and misconceptions of the truth should not interfere with this faith, whether they be moral or whether they be intellectual, I do not profess to understand. His reasoning would lead to the absurdity of asserting that in the end a

true faith and a false faith are the same ; in other words, that faith is unnecessary. But if, on the other hand, it be necessary, the inference is unavoidable that it must be true, since falsehood can be necessary to no man ; and so we come back to the assertion of the Creed, “ If any man will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith ; ”—that is, if he will be saved in that higher sense of salvation which the Christian Church believes and teaches, a true faith in the Trinity is necessary first and above all things. If he holds not the Catholic faith, he does not hold the faith of Christ ; he is without the gift and illumination of the Holy Spirit ; he is not of the Communion of Saints ; he is not assured of the forgiveness of sins and the life everlasting. The Church has one Gospel to preach and no other, one assurance of faith and no other, one baptism and no other ; and truth and charity, which in this matter are synonymous, will not suffer it to hold any but one language. Even, then, if it were to consent to the removal of the Athanasian Creed, or its omission, that would in no degree alter its teaching, but only obscure it. The same perplexities, the same contradictions, which induced it to adopt this Creed, as

the soundest, most perfect, and readiest exposition of its meaning, would either compel its restoration (if displaced), or leave this exposition and the removal of error to the fanciful and varying interpretations of unauthorized and individual teachers. Whenever great points of faith are called in question, the Church is bound, by all considerations of its place and function, clearly to give out its own meaning in regard to them; otherwise it ceases alike to guide and to govern. It abdicates its duty if it wilfully continues silent. Such an expression of its meaning as the Athanasian Creed is due alike to its own members and to those who dissent and depart from it; and any union that should be patched up among Christians, on implied ignorance, would be as immoral as it would be impolitic. We may possibly heal divisions by the careful and conscientious avowal of our convictions, never by mutual consent to smother differences.

And, lastly, even if men cannot at once discover the immediate relation of these sublime and holy mysteries to the practical duties of life, it is worth considering whether our feeble, narrow, and ignoble views of Christian truth are not in a great measure owing to the progress of these poor and utilitarian

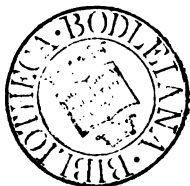


notions amongst us. This craving to be practical, by avoiding all subjects of Christian meditation and teaching except those of which we can trace the immediate and visible results, tends to limit the mind and its operations to a narrower and ever-narrowing circle. We are always striving to do all things, and leave God nothing to do—to magnify our own wisdom and potency, and to suspect His. Whereas, if these are truths—truths higher than any other, and more comprehensive—and the neglect of them is followed, as the Creed declares, with more awful consequences than any other neglect, the contemplation and the study of them deserve our utmost regard and attention, even if that study began and ended with contemplation. For who knows whether the habits of mind acquired by such contemplation are not part of the perfection of the Christian character—whether the light thus gained be not of paramount and indispensable importance for us, in order that we may discern aright those duties and their bearings which we are apt to consider as more immediately connected with our happiness?

Think you mid all this mighty sum  
Of things for ever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking?

Can the mind of man be in constant communion with the great truths unfolded in the doctrine of the Trinity, and remain as narrow, insensible, and unmoved as before? Rather will he not learn from such study more even "of moral evil and of good," than all the sages can tell him, and find a higher and purer atmosphere out of the darkness and confusion within him and around him?

But at least of this we may be sure, that the eye of faith, like the poet's eye of solitude, grows in strength and clearness the more intently it is fixed on these great, surpassing, and all-comprehensive verities; and as it grows, and thus becomes habituated to the light, it realizes that spiritual order and cosmogony in which it is placed. It begins to apprehend the meaning of those words "Open thou mine eyes, and I shall behold the wondrous things of thy Law." All things then begin to assume in his clearer spiritual vision their due value, place, order, and relation, and must reflect their rays into his innermost being. *Abeunt studia in mores.*



## APPENDIX.

### THE PROPOSED REVISION OF THE ANGLICAN VERSION OF THE ATHANASIAN CREED.

At the suggestion of the Bishop of Gloucester the Upper House of Convocation has been induced to appoint a Committee "to report upon the desirableness of revising the existing translation of the Athanasian Creed." The Bishop grounded his proposal on the supposed inaccuracies of our present version. As I have noticed in the course of this pamphlet all the more important objections produced by the Bishop, and have shown that these supposed mistranslations are strictly conformable to the teaching of the Church, I need not recur to them again. To one of these objections, on which the Bishop placed great stress, I did not refer; though I was fully aware of it. For it seemed to me to be of little or no force. He urged that the original Latin, *vult salvus esse*, ought to be rendered, "desires to be in a state of salvation," and not as we have it, "will be saved." I think it will be quite enough to refer his Lordship, in reply, to the opening clause of the second portion of the Creed, which evidently is little else than a reinforcement of the same statement. "Furthermore it is necessary *to eternal salvation* that he *also* believe, &c." (*Necessarium est ad æternam salutem*). What salvation the Church had in view in one case and in the other should be of no difficulty to any one.

But the Bishop, like many before him, proceeded on the assumption that the Reformers were misled by a Greek text of the Creed, and so, in departing from the strict letter of the Latin original, were guilty of inaccuracy. The Bishop assumes, in the first place, not merely that the Latin was the original, but the Latin of which he is

cognizant. There may be reasons for supposing that Athanasius was not the author of the Creed that bears his name, at least not in the exact form that we now have it; but there is no sufficient reason, that I know of, for supposing that it must have been written originally in Latin, beyond the fact that the Latin MSS. are of earlier date than the Greek. But admitting this to be so; admitting that the Greek copies were translated from the Latin; it is quite possible that, like other versions, they may have been translated from a better original than has come down to us, and have preserved readings which our Reformers preferred to the ordinary Latin copies. That preference may have been an error of judgment, but will in no wise bear out the Bishop's affirmation, that the departures from the text he would adopt—if as yet he is prepared to adopt any on sufficient evidence—were mistranslations and inaccuracies. Either these Greek texts were copied from an earlier Greek original, or they were translated from a Latin text. On both suppositions they would equally claim to have their authority taken for what it was worth in determining the exact text of the Creed.

The Bishop has made it perfectly clear, if it was not clear and undoubted before, that our Reformers did not strictly follow the Latin. It is also abundantly clear that they did not invariably follow the Greek. What is more noticeable, they departed from both, even when both were agreed. For whereas in the instance quoted by the Bishop: "In this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another," the Latin uses the words, "*nihil prius aut posterius; nihil majus aut minus,*" the Greek reads: οὐδὲν πρότερον ἢ ὕστερον, οὐδὲν μείζον ἢ ἔλαττον. And again: "He that will be saved *must* thus think of the Trinity;" is in Latin, "*ita sentiat;*" in Greek, οὕτω φρονεῖτω. In the next verse the English, "believe

rightly," objected to by Dr. Swainson, is "*fideliter credat*" in the Latin, and ὁρθῶς in the Greek. These, and other less important variations, show that the Reformers did not implicitly follow any one Greek or Latin copy known to us, but either formed a text for themselves, or had before them some MS. with which we are unacquainted.

It is equally certain that they did not servilely adhere to the Latin or the German text of the Augsburg Confession. The German version is more free than ours, and scrupulously avoids the use of the word Trinity. For our word *incomprehensible* in v. 9, it employs the word *unmeszlich*, equivalent to the Latin *immensus*. In v. 12, it follows the order of the Latin words, whereas our English follows that of the Greek. In v. 27 we read: "The Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity," following the ordinary Latin copies; but the German, with its Latin text, reads: "The Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity;" except that here as elsewhere it translates Trinitas into "*drei Personen*." In the last verse the Augsburg Confession adheres to the Latin "*fideliter firmiterque*;" the Greek varies; some copies reading πιστῶς τε καὶ βεβαίως, and some like our English, omitting the latter word.

Now of course it is at the option of Convocation to insist that we should go back to the Latin copies of the Sarum Use, and restore the text which the Reformers deliberately rejected. And backed by the learning and moderation of the Bishop of Chester, it is not impossible that its arguments may have great weight with the people of England. But I am inclined to think that what the Reformers did they did deliberately, and were not quite so ignorant or so easily misled as their descendants in this generation are apt to assume. At all events, these departures from the Latin involved no errors of doctrine, and were in no instance without the support of Catholic authority.

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*OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION.*

The Day of Days—The Grave Visited—Christ Appearing—The Going to Emmaus—The Forty Days—The Apostles Assembled—The Lake in Galilee—The Mountain in Galilee—The Return from Galilee.

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